THE COMMONWEAL

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VIEWERS AND REGARDERS

OPTIMISM, like poverty, we have always with us. There has been no period of the world's history so black with gathering clouds, in the material or spiritual order, that men whose temperament invited them to the sunnier solution would not inject some of the opsonins of their cheerfulness into the general low-spiritedness.

The methods of the prophet of fair things are as various as the basic reasons for his optimism. Sometimes his end seems best secured by a forthright denial of facts as observed and commented upon by his gloomier brethren in the province of vaticination. These were misinformed, or led into error by their apprehensions. At another time the facts will be so patent that they must, perforce, be admitted. In this case, it is upon the conclusions that optimism brings its rosy light to bear. A deep and abiding trust in physical nature, the encouragement of the ages, which has notoriously brought humanity through successive shocks and cataclysms down to the only world we know, the sheer intolerance of the healthy human organism for the germ of pessimism which finds a voice in the familiar saw that "every day is another day"—no chip is too light and no trunk too heavy for the beacon that the optimist can light at those tragic moments when the world has doubts of its endurance along the paths that faith and familiarity have endeared to it. Americans, who are a practical race, apt to consider wisdom of any sort as the poor relation of common sense, have coined two telling phrases to express the two states of mind. We talk, currently, of "regarders with approval" and of "viewers with alarm."

Dr. Mather A. Abbott, headmaster of the Lawrenceville School for Boys, who emerged from academic seclusion recently to give the Rotary Club of Trenton, New Jersey, his views upon the coming generation, is, quite obviously, a optimist of the first water, but of the second category. Dr. Abbott's admissions are of that comprehensive order which, in traditional language, cut the ground from under the feet of opponents, and necessitate a smart side-jump away from the perfunctory rejoinders that might tell against a less frank antagonist. As reported in the press, what the head of Lawrenceville School has to say is that belief of any kind in the unseen world, so far as an observation of thirty years has given him a chance to note, is becoming a thing of the past. The Doctor's words are too deliberate, they register too clearly a stage which contemporary thought has reached, not to deserve somewhat textual quotation.

"Their greatest characteristic [Dr. Abbott is speak-

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ing of the youths of pre-college age committed to his care] is that they must prove everything by experience. They do not begin where we leave off, as we want them to do. They must go through every experience for themselves. They take nothing for granted. . . . You cannot prove the other world and you cannot prove God, and the modern generation won't accept anything you cannot prove. So, though the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, the modern generation are practically without the fear of anyone whom they cannot see. . . . Not willing to face the deep questions of life, they try to seek happiness in the material."

Now, viewed from any angle that deserves the name of ethical, the picture Dr. Abbott was striving to draw for the Trenton Rotarians would be termed a dark one. Consider it a moment. An adolescent generation, sent to school to acquire wisdom, yet abjuring the very element their headmaster admits is its beginning. A generation to which all the experience of ages is offered in text-books and manuals, contemptuously determined, in the very act of learning it by rote, that they will take "nothing for granted," but, so soon as academic restrictions are removed, will "go through every experience" themselves. A generation selfish and quite cunning enough, for all its beardless chins, to realize that, in faith, love, subscription to any ideal—in Dr. Abbott's own five words "the deep questions of life," unhappiness and personal discomfort may lurk, so resolved to confine their "experiments" to the physical and material order. Who reading an indictment so sweeping and so unflattering, would not see in it the prelude to a positive cry of alarm, a summons to the youth of the nation to set its spiritual house in order while time was left it. They would grossly underestimate the faculty for optimism latent in the Dr. Abbots who from time to time lift reassuring voices in public.

"I have been in the business of teaching boys for thirty years," declares the Lawrenceville executive, "and I have at the present moment under my charge 540 boys collected from nearly every state in this God-given Union of ours, and I have never known a more truthful, clean-living, honorable set of young gentlemen, different from the boys of my youth as the sun is from the moon, full of nonsense, full of passion, full of the 'old Harry,' but five times [the precision is worth noting] as decent, as truthful and as manly as the boys of my youth."

It is no slur upon Dr. Abbott to say that his personal significance as a champion of youth, great as it may be, vanishes in the very far-reaching implications of what he tells us. If there be one thing upon which "viewers" and "regarders" seem agreed, it is that what we are watching today, in its virtues no less than its vices, is a return to pagan habits of thought, and that this return, as Charles Péguy warned the world shortly before his spectral end upon the western front, is coming to us through the generation who will be the mature men and women of tomorrow. In his own impressive words, "the pagan blood is flowing back." There is no need to labor testimony when even those who try to extract a cheerful moral admit it. It is no less evident in the old world than in the new, perhaps more so. The crisis now raging in the religious world of France over the condemnation of l'Action Française, is nothing more than a sharp clash between the older Catholic tradition and many thousands of French Catholic youths who follow Maurras in his neo-pagan ideology. In an article which The Commonweal noticed a few weeks ago, M. Decout, of the Revue Apologetique, noted a "contempt" for all branches of knowledge not to be turned into immediate monetary gain, and the "fascination" of material success among the pupils, even in Catholic colleges, who would correspond in age and social class roughly to the 540 young Americans at Lawrenceville.

The prospect of a generation in the near future, very largely pagan, not in the sense that religion has been learned and discarded, but in the sense that a large proportion of human character has been molded without its help at all, is far from being fantastic. Till now the scission between belief and unbelief has been masked by the survival of Christian tradition—in other words, religious motives for action have been disliked, but their force has been appreciated. A day may well be at hand, and nearer than optimism cares to admit, when even this tribute to what the Christian considers first values will not be conceded, and when believer and unbeliever, perhaps through no fault of the latter, will be speaking incommunicable languages. It should never be forgotten that it was incomprehension of the Christian attitude toward worship of the emperors, rather than hatred or suspicion, that led to the earlier persecutions.

Should this day ever arrive (and it is our business to see that it never does) it is obvious that professing Christians will have to call, not only upon their fortitude, but upon their indulgence. Nothing is gained by taking a catastrophic view of what a world largely un-Christian might mean. No really sane person believes that society will let go of all it has achieved through the Christian tradition merely because its faith in the tradition has weakened. But, in the sphere of intimate and personal relations, which law and order do not touch, it may well be a different matter. A measure of self-sacrifice of which our own generation has no idea, may lie before the Christian generation still unborn. It will be all the more meritorious and efficacious for better things if it is tinctured with that charity of which Father Martindale, in his article upon pagan morality, gives us some idea when he tells us that "it is easily conceded that pagans constantly lived better than their creed," so far better, indeed, that Augustine could say of them that they "saw the road from the hill-top."

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WEEK BY WEEK

PRESIDENT COOLIDGE'S Armistice Day address at Kansas City once more conceded to domestic partisan opinion the argument concerning the nation's attitude toward world affairs. By common consent, the declaration that the Senate would not be asked to reconsider the reservations upon which entry into the World Court is made contingent, was premature—excepting in so far as it satisfied those who oppose every kind of affiliation between the United States and Europe. The President obviously resigned any ambition he may have entertained to lead the groups which are attempting to formulate an advanced program for the conduct of foreign affairs. If the voters do not favor any such action, he seems to have thought, why should the government uselessly antagonize them? The trouble with this point of view is not so much that it endangers our national support of the specific mechanism known as the World Court. We here believe that the modifications under which it was proposed that the United States should join this tribunal are of such a character as to render the tasks of international adjudgment harmless and ineffective—and that a court clearly designed to serve as the instrument of the League of Nations cannot well be diverted to other uses without loss. But the opinion, the electorate, Mr. Coolidge bowed to at Kansas City, is opposed to the very concept of a new post-war world. It is simply not interested in the possibility of any international coöperation. Speaking to it in a tone of apology for what has been done on behalf of world organization was equivalent to commending its attitude of indifference. And, of course, that indifference was never so illogical or dangerous as now.

IF, as the President remarked, the national credit is a most important bulwark in the system of national defense, can we afford to endanger the increasingly large sums now invested in foreign industry and commerce? At the very moment of the address, another enormous loan was being floated here upon German security. It should be obvious that the yield and even the principle involved can be safe only if the peace of the world is not disturbed and if the danger of catastrophe is averted. Similarly, the development of United States wealth is, to a large extent, dependent upon the growth and maintenance of world commerce. One hopes that Mr. Coolidge, in describing the share our natural resources and agriculture take in the military defense of the nation, did not wish to imply that prosperity, too, may rely upon purely local sources. That hope is reinforced, a little cynically, by the attention given to war indebtedness—a matter emphasized, of course, by the inevitable appeal to "righteousness," against which no amount of realism can prevail. It matters little that the contemporary picture of American-European relations is queer and shadowy—a picture having, on the one hand, an incomparably wealthy people intent upon swelling its income, not only through foreign financial investments and commerce, but also through collecting war-time subsidies by means of heavy taxation; and having, on the other hand, a series of weakened and discouraged nations who are expected, for the sake of righteousness, to surrender their savings with a smile during more than a generation. Under the circumstances, one really cannot help applauding the remarkable deftness with which the President set forth the only two points of contact with Europe he recognizes: friendly participation in the World Court, which he patently frowns upon; and rigid debt collection, so agreeable to his soul. Small wonder that the "rest of the world" enjoyed the address thoroughly! But still it needs to be borne in mind that Mr. Coolidge is indebted to an important section of the electorate for his inspiration. Little can be done against a hang-over from war-time indignation and disillusionment.

NEWS of a pact between various Asiatic countries under the leadership of Russia has naturally been received with great interest. In view of present conditions, it seems that the most important result of such organization would be the alliance of Turkey and Sovietism. Both are directly affected by the political situation in the Near East, and might combine to shut the gate of Constantinople against the West. That various warnings of danger have been received is a likely conclusion from such remarks as those addressed by Professor Gilbert Murray to a New York audience. The distinguished English liberal felt that Russia

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should be admitted into the League of Nations. He repeated a favorite German thesis that the continued efficacy of the League depends upon the maintenance of "parliamentary governments"—that an association of European nations will be successful only if the members are similar in basic political character. Because Russia is essentially anti-parliamentarian, it is also hostile to Geneva. Could this standpoint be transformed into one of friendly coöperation with Geneva, and inferentially of tolerance for parliaments, a grave danger would be averted. It need scarcely be observed, however, that the "danger" is by no means so great in Europe proper, as it is in various districts attached to Europe by imperial tenure. Of these last, an Englishman's heart and mind are always conscious.

THE problem of racial minorities in southeastern Europe, brought into prominence once more by a protest against certain happenings in Roumania, is most crucial in the Czecho-Slovakian republic. When one observes that the answer of a Slovak peasant to Masaryk's inquiry about the government was, "All Czechs should be packed into a cannon, and then it should be fired," and that this bitter response has been made a kind of slogan by Slovak separatists, it is easy to see that harmony does not reign as preëminently as it might. One of the actions of Monsignor Hlinka, the Slovak leader, while on a visit to this country, was to secure the original copy of the Pittsburgh Agreement on the basis of which the new republic was established. This document has been declared invalid by President Masaryk on the ground that it was signed on a legal holiday, and therefore can claim no legal standing. We are informed by a reliable authority that the Monsignor's parting words to his American friends were: "They can decapitate me, but they cannot make me give up the fight for Slovak rights. We have had eight years of evolution and nothing has come from them. There is just one thing left for us to do—leave them!" The consequences of such a step would, of course, be very great. Slovak separatism would add just one more barrier to the necessary economic and social amity of the continent. But if the principle of self-determination was right, it ought honestly to be carried through regardless of the details agreed upon immediately after the war. From the Slovak point of view, the new republic was only an experiment. It remains to be seen whether this and all similar experiments will bring about a situation as desirable, not to speak of more desirable, than the old imperial government assumed was normal.

IN the face of official silence, it is impossible to assert definitely that the latest note sent to the Mexican government by the State Department is more than usually frank and emphatic. But there is no doubt that the present condition of the petroleum industry is a matter which proves that the Monroe Doctrine is a source of trouble as well as of prestige. The retreat of the British government from the scene really leaves Washington no choice: it must assume the burden of talking or coercing Mexico into a decent respect for alien property rights. We are not inclined to think the difficulties involved will be stupendous. Practically the only party which supports the present Mexican policy is the Crom, and this, according to accumulated recent evidence, is disintegrating rapidly. The real opportunity for trouble lies precisely where Obregon, in a characteristic address, said it does—in the possibility that the stand of the United States on petroleum and land legislation may be confused with the religious struggle. Doubtless it would be easy to spread the belief that our government, acting purely in the realm of economic and legal matters, was rushing to the aid of the Catholic Church in Mexico. To forestall that, it is quite essential that Catholics themselves should refrain from clouding the issue with appeals for intervention or repudiation. In due time, the persecution will end; and the hour will be hastened by prayer and charity. Meanwhile, it is important that all American citizens should recognize the delicate and important problems with which their representatives are dealing.

THAT these are intimately connected with revolutionary movements of an ambitious character, becomes clear once again from the negotiations opened between the "Revolutionary Junta" of Nicaragua and President Calles. "Having swept the unsolicited services of the United States from the political scene, having checked the aspirations of expansion and dominion of that imperialistic country, and having achieved the Central American Union, there will be concerted a true and lasting alliance between Mexico and the new nation of the Isthmus," says the official document. If this were merely a declaration of opinion that "self-determination" is in danger, one might view it calmly for the reason that the United States has never seriously threatened the rights of the Nicaraguan people. The appeal is rather to the zest for a certain program of social revolution, and to the feeling of race solidarity. A definite communistic virus, derived from European sources, has poisoned the whole Mexican and Central-American consciousness. That it will sooner or later bring on an upheaval in the political domain, quite as destructive as that already witnessed in the realm of spiritual matters, is a fact that must be accepted and prepared for.

MANY theories have been advanced for the dark and sinister doings in Cambridge and Princeton. One is that the entire editorial staff of the Harvard Lampoon was composed of Princeton men in disguise—agents provocateurs of embattled Tigerdom. On the whole, a more probable suggestion is the deeply psychoanalytical one that Harvard men, being so long

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repressed in New England isolation, had developed a New York complex and envied the greater freedom of wealthy Princetonians to speed in mighty cars along the lovely swamps of Jersey toward picturesque Broadway. Hence the slanderous nature of the Lampoon references. Even if we accept this as the fundamental reason why several thousand young men of voting age find it impossible to jostle a football with several thousand similar young men a few miles away (and in accepting, we demand a new suffrage law extending the vote to grammar-grade children) there remains the horrible suspicion that the future of our republican institutions is at stake.

SINCE football tickets are surely the main objective of collegiate training, what if Princeton and Harvard graduates should extend the zone of hate and bring the nation to a standstill? What if Princetonian lawyers should refuse to argue cases where the opposing counsel are Cantabridgians? What if financial houses, dominated by sinister Harvard interests, should refuse participation in syndicates originated by Princetonian houses? Above all, what dire consequences if both camps should awaken some sunny morning to find the lost trappings of their humor hanging outside their tents? Then—perish the thought!—this fair country of ours might explode with the thunders of Gargantuan laughter! Gentlemen, at all costs, let's be serious!

FEW will disagree with the Reverend Edward Russell, rector of Saint Anne's Episcopal Church in New York, in his suggestion that love and respect for the national story should take the form of preserving memorials which are associated with it. Everyone does not possess the "genius loci" which is stirred by contact with the actual buildings in which the drama of the nation was played out. To give a single instance, it will be remembered with what a light heart the destruction of the Smith mansion on the Hudson, where no less a turning point of history than the Arnold-André treason took place, was proposed a few months ago. But to those who do possess a strong sense of the past, such destruction comes home as a poignant and irrevocable loss. There are difficulties in the way in this country, not unconnected with the change in the racial population of our older towns, which hinder a strong feeling of local pride in ancient buildings. But there also is not the same excuse, as in overcrowded Europe, for their demolition that newer buildings may rise in their place. Historical and literary societies have already done wonders and by the public interest they have aroused, have prevented many an aesthetic outrage. But perhaps the most practical measure would be some form of declaration, as used in France, that certain buildings are "national monuments" and not to be lightly touched by those whose attitude was summed up once and for all in Lewis Carroll's distich: " 'If this could all be cleared away,' they said, 'it would be grand.' "

SOME idea of the interest now being taken in mediaeval arts and social practices throughout what may be termed the scholarly United States, is to be gained from a compilation recently made by Professor Willard, of the University of Colorado, and published as "Bulletin 4" by the Mediaeval Academy of America. Several hundred professional scholars are enumerated, and a long list of doctoral dissertations and other published works of recent date is appended. The chief point brought out, however, is not so much the quantity of interest revealed (the lists might easily be added to) as the diversity of subjects upon which that interest is expended. Many mediaevalists are, of course, frankly little more than specialists in some branch of linguistic study. Because they teach the languages of the ninth and tenth centuries, it is assumed that they are also curious about the life of the ninth and tenth centuries. It is encouraging to note that this assumption is now more amply justified than it was ten or twenty seasons ago. One can, at least in a dozen universities, study Old English under men really fond of the human background against which their rather parched and dry specialty reposes. The foundation of the Mediaeval Academy was therefore timely and healthful because it can coördinate and develop still further the spiritual and creative directions tangent to studies in pre-modern European cultural matters.

WE should like to connect this observation with the remarks made by Monsignor Seipel to a Viennese audience after his return from the United States. He had much to say in our praise, but expressed himself surprised at the uniformity and meaninglessness of American Catholic ecclesiastical architecture. It was, he thought, stereotyped copying throughout. Now we fancy that Monsignor Seipel would be a little astonished if he knew how many people here agree with him. The very fact that our churches are so frequently "reprints" is widely used as a plea against subservience to the mediaeval pattern. It is true that an architect who merely attempts to copy Sainte-Clothilde or the spires of Cologne—often under circumstances which preclude the expenditure of money—is usually only a rather unfortunately ambitious contractor. If one could find, beyond the architectural monuments it erected, the virile tempo of mediaeval society, one might profitably try to work in the same spirit and with similar artistic ideals. That would not be imitation, but creative energy using the priceless and inexhaustible auxiliaries of tradition. But it cannot be done alone, or without effort. Success will come through associated scholarship and insight.

THE effort to improve a little the minor arts related to the spirit, for instance, is often shattered by the

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difficulty of transmuting theory into practice. The making of beautiful things depends upon conditions only partly determinable in advance—upon the spirit of the artisan, the opportunity for profit without commercialization, and the natural gifts of the promoter of the enterprise. It is therefore a pleasure to draw attention to a little experiment in the craft of printing now being made in the small and not too sophisticated city of Manchester, New Hampshire. There a Sister of Mercy—long since well known as the editor of a monthly magazine—has founded a little society truly mediaeval in spirit, even though modern in aims and atmosphere. Beginning with the knowledge that many young women in the neighborhood, some of them parentless and others very poor, were being deprived of all opportunity for education, she founded a school in which the teaching of cultural subjects was combined with training in practical trades. This school was made self-supporting in the sense that the girls admitted met the current expenses of the establishment by work done during part of their leisure time. A printing press, which reproduced religious cards and pamphlets, was the chief source of revenue. But little by little, the artistic instincts of some of the young women were quickened; they began to try making graceful pictures which they adorned or colored by hand; and today the Magnificat Press supplies to many a variety of appropriate art material for use at Christmas time and numerous other occasions. The future development of the place depends, of course, upon its being able to interest a larger public.

LIGHTING and smoking a cigarette has been defined, by one of that troublesome class, the "ethico-medical authorities," as "an alternative to taking a decision." If we may rely upon figures lately published by Mr. Carl Avery Werner, editor of the Tobacco Leaf, and which have reached this office by the circuitous route of the Paris Figaro, the habit of deferring resolutions has become our most deeply-rooted national vice. Statistics are always fascinating, and even the habit of thinking in billions which is one of the aftermaths of the war, does not deprive the figures quoted by Mr. Werner of a breath-taking quality all their own. Briefly, the annual consumption of cigarettes in the United States, which in 1860 only totaled the paltry figure of 1,751,495, had risen within the next decade to 13,881,417; and by 1880, to 408,-708,366. Within the next thirty or forty years, figures soar to a height where only the processes of arithmetical progression can follow them, and not to be tiresome, the series may fittingly be rounded off by a rough calculation of this year's manufacture which, with ten weeks still to go, is put, always by the same authority, at 75,000,000,000. The reformer is free to make what he can out of this statement. In any case, his argument has to face the danger that the figures quoted, by proving too much, prove nothing at all. Were all the hard things that have been said about nicotine justified in medical fact, the citizenry of the Union, male and female, would by now be wards of the state, and only psychopaths would be free to make any decision at all. There may be a grain of truth in the cynic's remark that providence, in permitting America and tobacco to be discovered at the same time, knew what it was about.

THE MARLBOROUGH CASE

CHARLES DANA, the great editor of the New York Sun, is reported to have found no better illustration of news value than that, if a dog bit a man it did not matter, whereas, if a man bit a dog, it was front-page stuff. All the elements of "big news"—extreme rarity, social position of the parties concerned, and food for discussion—have been present in the Marlborough-Vanderbilt case, and it is not surprising that the story has kept the front page for days in our metropolitan dailies. As often happens, comment—and comment from a very high quarter, did not wait upon all the facts, and in the light of details that have gradually found their way into print from correspondents at Rome and in London, the Episcopal Bishop of New York must feel by now that his preemption of the major moral shock was over-hasty.

Catholics regard Bishop Manning, and Bishop Manning's views on marriage as a sacrament, with too much sympathy and approval, to try to read into his words any real insinuation that the ecclesiastical courts at Rome use two balances in matters of conjugal discipline. He is notoriously a strenuous opponent of divorce, although his own communion is a much divided body upon that question, and appears to benefit in individual cases by a compromise that Catholics have never been able to understand clearly. In view of the consolation he takes and has often expressed, in the more rigid doctrine of the older Church, it is to be regretted that the good Bishop did not evidence a little more faith.

The dogma that Rome never grants a divorce from a valid and consummated marriage remains, in fact, undisturbed by this latest exercise of her mandate. What happens, though it only becomes public property when such attendant circumstances as exist in the present case make it matter of public interest, is that Rome, upon evidence which her courts judge conclusive, at times declares that what was presumed a marriage is null—in other words, that there has been, in a particular case, no marriage at all.

As far as the facts have been reported in the Marlborough-Vanderbilt case, Mme. Jacques Balsan has asked the Catholic Church to declare her marriage to the Duke of Marlborough null, on the ground that she was morally coerced into the contract, and was therefore not free. Consequently, there was no valid or real marriage. All that Rome does is to so de-

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clare. If the testimony were against the fact of moral coercion, the Catholic Church could only declare that the marriage was valid.

The essence of the question is simply, "was there a marriage or not?" If there was a marriage—i.e., all the elements present that constitute a marriage—the contract stands indefectible; if there was no marriage—i.e., some element present that vitiated it—there never has been a true marriage. This is sound law, whether civil or ecclesiastical, because it is sound sense. When an appeal is made to the Church to pass upon the validity or invalidity of a marriage contract, in view of the status of some Catholic whose rights in one way or another are affected by the validity or invalidity of the contract in question, it is clearly the province of the Church to adjudicate the matter. What God has joined together, let no man put assunder, is the adamantine basis of the Catholic Church's marriage law. She has been adjudicating such matters for over two thousand years, and assuredly knows her own business better than people undeniably of good will but very partially instructed in her practices and her principles. In the very early history of his own communion, Bishop Manning may find conclusive evidence of how impervious to expediency Rome can show itself when not satisfied by the evidence that even a king could procure and present.

TWO SCHOOLS FOR MEN

DURING the past two weeks, two important matters have been noticed with some attentiveness: Armistice Day and education. The idea of setting apart a definite portion of the year for the especial consideration of the achievements and problems of the school is not merely excellent in principle, but also effective in practice. To speak of the innumerable programs which have stressed the cause of education would be impossible even if we cared to do so. But it ought not to pass unnoticed that Armistice Day itself has a very especial relation to the training of men. First of all, naturally, there is the effect which this commemoration of the dead must have on the minds of a generation still able to recall what the lads who fell in battle or died in camp were like when they lived, and still freshly conscious of the universal consequences of the great catastrophe. Then too, it cannot be forgotten that the war itself led the American people to intensify their interest in education by drawing their attention to the valuable qualities of leadership and developed intelligence. The generation which followed the summons to battle has literally swarmed into the college classrooms. It has flooded the whole academic area, creating problems of space and efficiency which did not exist previously.

Most important of all, however, was the effect which came from the desire for a certain kind of training. What we all thought we wanted was the "leader"—the man who can control, direct, and inspire as the army officer supposedly does. Education became, therefore, an endeavor to create energy. Its goal was dynamic. And, of course, the most varied recipes were advocated, the most notable being the blending of cultural study with professional training. The older lawyer had frequently been a country boy who, by dint of lingering over his books in a law office, had managed to prepare for the bar and a firm, strictly legal career. Our modern attorney was to take a longer breath. First, he would read through the literatures and philosophies, incidentally trying out his powers in that peculiar miniature democracy called campus life. Then, he would enter, mature and already a cultured gentleman, upon the study of his special science. There was virtually no professional training which did not envisage this dream of "leadership."

Now even if one cannot say that the future of education in the United States depends upon the success with which our effort to realize a national dream can be carried through, it is certainly quite likely that the dream itself will fade. The army which so powerfully suggested the theme of leadership should also have demonstrated that nature is vitally concerned. Men who pick their way step by step through the entanglements of actuality, often arrive at a mastery which no theoretically trained person can rival—a mastery which reposes upon inherited virtues, industry, and experience. It may be that intensive intellectual training might have done something for these men. But quite possibly, their equals cannot be developed by ever so strenuous applications of academia to a personality not qualified to reach the goal set forth.

Mystics, for instance, are not campus growths. The most varied assortment of courses would not produce a Tauler or a Suso. And although Richard Rolle was, as a recent book again reminds us, deeply indebted to Saint Thomas for ideas of social justice, he himself was about as far from "college" as it is possible to think a brilliant student could be. Perhaps there is something akin to the mystical in those temperaments which shape human destinies and control the directions of the state. We know only that while the educative process does not seem, by common consent, to have brought forth the governing minds so greatly needed and desired, it has for centuries victoriously produced its own especial personality—the man of study and wise understanding, of reflection and divination, of creative insight and expression. Without this man the world of historical civilization is inconceivable. He is Duns Scotus, Edmund Spenser, Cardinal Cusano, or—let us say—Walter Pater. But conceivably there is not a thing in the world to be gained through trying to supplant him with embryo leaders by means of whom a distraught democracy wishes to hoist itself into the saddle.

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OUR BICAMERAL COLLEGES

By BURGES JOHNSON

(This article is the third in the series on modern education announced some weeks ago by The Commonweal. Mr. Johnson, the author of the present paper, and well known as an educator and essayist, will conclude his views on American higher education in an early issue.—The Editors.)

HOW can our American colleges, which train but a meagre 3 percent of all our young people, help greatly to solve any national problem? The question is always a pertinent one, because education seems to be the only final cure for any of the ills of a democracy.

One answer is obvious; they might bear the same relation to our whole citizenship that a single military school may bear to a national army. The colleges are to train leaders in the sort of thinking and doing that is necessary in a democracy. But if the army will not accept such trained leadership, then you are as far from an answer as ever. We must persuade our democracy to convert itself voluntarily into an oligarchy of the intellectually trained. There are evidences that it refuses to become so converted, and this gives rise to a great deal of pessimism.

That omnipresent person, General Public, is always seeking and accepting leadership of some sort, and occasionally from men of the finest scholarship; but he demands that they shall possess at the same time an ability to lead, and a belief in democracy. The colleges have given us comparatively few such men. Will they give us more in the future? Were these few merely accidental—not so much trained by the colleges, as unharmed by them? Is there some reason why the man in the street resents the very accents of scholarship? No one can answer such questions. But we can consider whether our colleges attempt to fit as many as possible of their pitifully small percent for the great task, and whether they are equipped to provide the right training.

The old universities of Europe, whence came our traditions, were designed to nurture thoughtful scholars. They succeeded so well that their students often turned against the state. Again and again, student groups were the political trouble-makers of their day. Then came a government which was the outworking of popular will and more general intelligence. Consciously or unconsciously, the colleges in this new land adopted a characteristic unknown in the old world—a residential social life that to some extent reproduced the civil organization outside, and yet was actually a part of the college.

Here was a great opportunity to adjust learning to living, or living to learning, with a campus laboratory at the door of the classroom for training in public service. But our classrooms were inherited from an old world where the pursuit of learning was a selfish pursuit. Soon we found in these new-world colleges certain problems hitherto unknown, which arose from an ancient conflict, waged now between college life in the classroom and college life on the campus, each having a different objective. We found, if such a thing is conceivable, a machine that was divided against itself.

Of course, I speak of our undergraduate colleges, and not our post-graduate schools. It is the former which have the handling of the entire 3 percent of our young people of college age and then send the bulk of them out into immediate citizenship.

Some time ago, there was a small conference of certain foreign students here in America. They had come from one little country, the seat of an ancient university, and they wished to formulate advice for any young fellow-countrymen who might follow in their footsteps. Upon one criticism of our undergraduate colleges they all agreed—the immaturity of our students and the elementary character of their studies. Our freshman and sophomore years, they said, corresponded to the high schools in their homeland, rather than to any class in their university. They recommended that fellow-countrymen coming to American colleges should come when much younger. But there was another point upon which they agreed, and they could not reconcile it with the first criticism. American students, they said, came out of these colleges intellectually immature, but surprisingly well-trained in a social way. They had noted, for instance, that young women college graduates newly fledged from these immature classrooms could go into devastated sections of Europe and, single-handed, undertake matters of organization or management which perplexed many an older European official and which mature European women did not dream of facing.

But there is no anomaly about this. There is nothing similar to our campus life at a European university. It is this campus experience at our colleges which is providing one kind of training, while the curriculum is providing another. Those young women who went to Europe during and immediately after the war were the products of the campus more than of the classroom.

Our American colleges were not bicameral at the very beginning. The classroom was dominant. That was in a golden age when an undisturbed devotion to abstract learning was frankly sought. The college function then was to train new teachers, or a scholarly clergy which carried on the tradition of a pulpit ordinarily remote from mundane affairs. Campus life was a meagre although a rebellious thing.

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Then there came a middle—a Victorian—period, and I speak of it diffidently, for generalizations are so dangerous. The faculties of this time boasted few specialists, as we now define the term. The man who taught Latin might as well teach German or geology, being transferred from one post to another for expediency's sake. Often he had not been trained for teaching, but for the ministry. He was a cultured gentleman, trying to pass his gentle culture on to the next generation. Sometimes he succeeded. Graduates of that period are fond of saying that they got little or nothing from the classroom, but much from contact with their fellows and from social contacts with their teachers who were frequently more effective outside the classroom than in it. Many graduates of the 'eighties and 'nineties who now rank high in learning, while acknowledging a social debt to their colleges, admit that in scholarship their real debt is to post-graduate work. "I cannot recall," says one, "that in all my undergraduate days I ever voluntarily visited the college library"; and a Harvard professor today admits that until his senior year he did not know where the library was. If this is true of some who were destined for a scholarly life, what of the rank and file? Examine the records of our famous colleges, and find the answer. These Victorian graduates began to succeed in business and affairs, and to assert that their only debt is owed the campus rather than the classroom.

I am sure that my generalizations are true enough to prove that the two sides of our American college life have each had a distinct existence, and each has performed a separate service. Surely they should work together if the colleges are to do their best to provide men of scholarly mind trained to take a useful part in the life of a democracy.

But instead of drawing together, it appears that often they have drawn further apart. The broadly cultured gentlemen of our Victorian faculties have gradually given place again to specialists highly trained in narrow fields. Such teachers are more devoted to learning for its own sake than ever before. To sustain it they find themselves at war with campus life; and such thought as they can spare for general college problems they must give to a reconciliation of their own special interests within the faculty. At the same time, campus life began to lose all of its cloistered character, and as it did so it took on many undesirable characteristics of the life outside. Victorian graduates began to take a new and sentimental interest in alma mater and recalling that the campus was their best friend in undergraduate days, threw their influence one-sidedly in favor of the campus. College clubs and college politics aped outside manners indiscriminately; venality entered into games; success in student activities was measured, not in terms of classroom idealism, but by worldly standards; while graduates vaguely interested in education gave lavishly to student clubs and arenas. Here was drawing apart with a vengeance!

The classroom undoubtedly can develop scholars, and it does so; the campus can train successful men of affairs, and it is doing that. But the two are so easily non-identical. Students too often can shrewdly watch the successful scholar graduate and detach himself from the world in a selfish enjoyment of his own intellectual pursuits, and the successful campus leader graduate and fight business battles with any weapons. We could easily get along without colleges in a democracy if these separated types were to be their only products!

If classroom and campus are to work together for one product, it is not campus life alone that must make overtures. A scholarship that thinks of fellow-citizens in terms of the pronoun "they" rather than "we" is far too common. Teachers who indulge in scholarly criticism of affairs as though the critics were somehow aloof and remote and bore no share of personal responsibility, tend to implant this sense of aloofness in the minds of their students.

Curiously enough, it is sometimes due to the zeal of a certain type of graduate busybody that the "pointing" of the work of the classroom toward training for citizenship is prevented. The teacher who would urge the responsibilities of every-day life in connection with the material of his classroom is sure to reveal his own private opinions, social and political. Then the howl goes up—from radical graduate if the teacher be a conservative; from fundamentalist if he be a modern. They do not want to find out whether or not he is proselyting. They object because he voices an opinion, instead of thanking God that he is a man with a mind and a sense of citizenship in this world. We hear talk now and then of "academic freedom." For every one college trustee who might want to muzzle a professor there are hundreds of such graduates who would like to frighten him back again into the silence of a completely cloistered scholarship.

But far commoner than aloofness from national affairs is aloofness from campus affairs. This little community of the campus is a part of the college; yet it is easy for the teaching specialist to think of campus life, not as a potential laboratory, but as a necessary evil, and his relation to it merely that of a drafted policeman. It is too easy for campus life to be utterly unaffected by the theories and ideals taught even in those classrooms devoted to obviously related subjects. And teachers may be blind to the fact that this is a severe indictment of themselves. It is as though all student speech and writing outside the classroom were totally unaffected by the practice within. It is as though a student debate upon immigration utilized no information gained in the study of economics or political science.

Unquestionably, the work of the classroom is the

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first business of the college. It might become the whole business, if the campus could be considered as an outgrowth of it. Some time ago, a college president wrote:

> We need not forget that these [campus] activities are only accidental and that the real value lies in the studies and the teaching. But none the less it is true that these activities reveal to us, far better than any examinations can do, the success or failure of the classroom itself. They are, as it were, mirrors in which we can see ourselves and our work. If we want to know the effect of what we are doing in the classroom, let us look to see what the students are doing outside of it when they are free to follow their own desires. If they do not on their own initiative carry on activities springing out of their studies, then you may count on it, however well the tests are met, that the studies are of little value.

I have said that the campus, which might be a laboratory for the practice of classroom ideals, itself draws away and tends to practise quite different things, thinking of itself as an almost independent institution. Here again a certain graduate pressure is in the wrong direction. I venture to guess that a score of college presidents in these latter days who have sought to harmonize the ideals of classroom and campus have been blocked by alumni. Perhaps one has found a fraternity system so constituted that it fought against every college ideal. "It must conform to our standards or be abolished," says the president, and beats out his zeal against a solid wall of graduate opposition. Perhaps another has found an athletic system even more at variance, with college control over it nominal, and alumni control actual—and that control vicious and held with a grip he could not break. Such executives may preside over colleges without teachers enough, without funds enough to pay their teachers decently, without enough standard reference books in the library to enable even small groups of students to study simultaneously, without playground enough to enable all students to play when they ought to; and yet able to build stadiums worth many millions of dollars so that the graduates may have enough seats at the games.

Why is there not more graduate aid for campus activities other than athletics? Students would surely like to have better newspaper offices, better stage scenery, better glee-club quarters, better orchestra equipment, better hired orchestras for important dances; but these things they must provide as best they can for themselves. "If they want to play at those things," say the alumni, "it is good for them to stand on their own feet. But their sports make a holiday for us!"

The danger of alumni influence threatens at more points as their devotion to the old college becomes greater, and they desire to see it avoid "mistakes" in academic policy. Their pressure to add new courses or to eliminate old ones may become a real embarrassment to the experts in education who are directing the classroom. The collective heart of a zealous graduate group may speak louder than its collective head when educational problems are concerned.

L'ACTION FRANÇAISE: THE CRISIS

By FÉLIX KLEIN

THE condemnation of l'Action Française issued by Cardinal Andrieu, Archbishop of Bordeaux, and sanctioned by the Papacy, has aroused, in France and neighboring countries, not only among Catholics, but among all who are interested in politico-religious matters, a profound emotion, which the past two months has only intensified. The incident has acquired too much importance to be passed over in silence. For the sake of greater clearness and objectivity, a recapitulation of the facts may be of some use.

Under the title: Reply to a Question from a Group of Young Catholics on the Subject of l'Action Française, the Archbishop of Bordeaux, on August 25, 1926, published an extremely weighty document. In this, after declaring that the leaders of this journal are free, like all the rest of the world, so far as the choice and diffusion of their purely political ideas are concerned, he reproached them with the gravest errors on the subjects of God, the Church, morality, and sociology. The letter concluded with these words:

> Atheism, agnosticism, anti-Christianity, anti-Catholicism, amoralism in the individual and in society—the necessity of maintaining order in spite of these subversive negations—of restoring paganism with all its injustice and with all its violences, these, my dear friends, are the doctrines which the directors of l'Action Française are teaching their disciples, and to which you should turn a deaf ear.

When one remembers that the partisans of l'Action Française have vaunted themselves as being defenders of religion, in fact, the only defenders truly and fundamentally orthodox, and have freely accused republican Catholics of being liberals, modernists, pacifists, and democrats (in their mouths the final reproach) and more or less heretics, it is easy to imagine the sensation such a letter produced, the more so because it emanated from a prelate who has always passed as a most resolute champion of conservative ideas. But those were not surprised who were aware of the anti-religious convictions of M. Maurice Pujo, editor-in-chief of the journal in question, of M. Jacques Bainville, one of its principal editors (who only this year

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edited a new edition of the licentious and impious Contes of Voltaire, expressing great admiration for them) and above all, the theories of M. Charles Maurras, political director of the journal and acknowledged head of the party—the undisguised admiration of this writer and publicist for the positivism of Auguste Comte, his contempt for "Jewish writings," his wistfulness for the old pagan civilization, his conviction that Christianity has destroyed an essential order of things by suppressing slavery, by preaching such things as the brotherhood of all men, respect for the little ones of the earth, pity for the weak—in short, by promulgating what Maurras in a phrase almost incredible, has termed "the poison of the Magnificat."

The greatest surprise was felt in that somewhat numerous group of sincere Catholics, who, without having read the books of Maurras and without appreciating what lay at the base of his principles, followed him with enthusiasm, led on by his talents as a writer, his profound hatred of the republic, and by the ardent warfare he has conducted against the ill-omened policy of laicization and against the many culpable words and acts of those who govern us. On September 8, certain prominent men among these Catholics addressed a lively protest to Cardinal Andrieu: "Our consternation in face of these reproofs," they wrote, "is inexpressible. They are the contradiction, formal, rigorous and absolute, of our deepest and most sacred convictions. It is evident to us that Your Eminence has been misled upon our position by malevolent enemies of our cause."

At the time that this protest reached Bordeaux, a document of far greater significance was in the hands of Cardinal Andrieu. This was no less than a letter from Pius XI himself. The supreme head of the Church, in moderate, but no less clear and decisive terms, approved the condemnation of l'Action Française and made it his own. As official declarations by the Sovereign Pontiff throw a final and authoritative light upon the whole question for Catholics, his exact words must be quoted:

> We have read with great pleasure the reply made by Your Eminence to the young Catholics who had asked for guidance in the matter of l'Action Française. In it we find fresh and striking proof of your pastoral solicitude, and of the paternal care of Your Most Reverend Eminence for souls, especially for those of our youth, so ceaselessly menaced today.
>
> Your Eminence points out one danger, all the graver in the present case because it is more or less directly, but not always perceptibly, related to Catholic faith and morals. It might well, and by insensible degrees, mislead the veritable Catholic spirit, the fervor and piety of our youth, offend the delicacy of its purity both by the written and spoken word—in short, abase the perfection of Christian practice, and still more the apostolate of true Catholic action by which all the faithful, but our younger members especially, are called to labor for the extension and the strengthening of the kingdom of Jesus Christ in the individual, in the family, and in society.
>
> Your Eminence has done well in leaving to one side purely political questions, for example, the form of government. On this point, the Church leaves to each one his just liberty. On the other hand, one is not, as Your Eminence points out clearly—equally at liberty to follow blindly the directors of l'Action Française in matters which regard faith or morals.
>
> With great reason, Your Eminence enumerates and condemns (in published matter, not only of distant date) certain manifestations of a new religious, moral and social system, on the subject, for example, of God, of the Incarnation, of the Church, and upon Catholic morality and dogma generally, principally in their necessary connection with political matters which are logically subordinated to morality. In these manifestations, there are substantial traces of a renaissance of paganism which their authors (unconsciously, we believe) have acquired through the public teaching of that modern and laicized school which they themselves often combat so ardently.
>
> We are always made anxious by the sight of the perils which beset our dear youth from all sides, even when they assume the form of a thing so praiseworthy as love of country. We are rejoiced that voices, even outside France, have been raised to warn them and put them on their guard.

This pontifical document bears the date of September 5. Far from putting an end to the controversy, as one would have wished, it is hardly too much to say that it inaugurated it. Rome has found itself forced to intervene again and again and to explain its action clearly, either in order to defend itself against insinuations and attacks that were quite unlooked-for, or to demand from the Catholic disciples of l'Action Française a more complete submission than they seemed prepared to offer.

The National Federation of Catholic Students of l'Action Française, a Parisian group, having forwarded to the Pope, on September 13, an address of submission, and a promise, expressed in rather too general terms, to avoid henceforth the dangers which he had indicated, we find the Cardinal Secretary of State, on October 2, writing to the Archbishop of Paris that the Holy Father has been touched by their good sentiments. "It should not be forgotten," he adds, "that when dangers, especially dangers in matters of faith and morals are at stake, the first rule to follow is to keep away from them as far as possible." And Cardinal Gasparri concludes: "To affirm that one receives and accepts from the Church only those lessons which concern faith and morals is neither a coherent statement nor a sufficient safeguard, so long as one remains under the influence and direction of chiefs who, in their writings, have shown themselves poor masters of Christian morals and doctrines."

Cardinal Maurin, Archbishop of Lyons, in a paternal note of his Semaine Réligieuse, having expressed a desire that peace should be established and "the affair closed," many attempted to deduce that the entire question was settled. The Osservatore Romano pro-

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tested against this false interpretation of the Cardinal's words and seized the occasion to be even more precise upon the ideals of the Holy See. It repeated that "l'Action Française, being a school of politics, following M. Maurras's lead, had not the right to make faith and morals an abstraction." It added: "We must conclude that it is the duty of good Catholics to be on their guard against that school, rendered doubly dangerous by the prestige which the chiefs in question enjoy."

If only for this reason, it seems to me that La Croix and other Catholic organs which have with praiseworthy zeal made a point of faithfully interpreting the thought of the Holy Father, will do well to follow the route so well begun, for the good of religion, the country generally, and especially its youth.

It has, in fact, become a matter of the first importance for our Catholic press, not only to circulate the decisions of religious authority in exact fashion, but to defend them against a campaign of detraction carried out more or less directly by l'Action Française, and in an overt and outrageous fashion by its friends in other organs of Paris and the provinces. According to these journals, the Archbishop of Bordeaux and the Pope himself have been deceived and misinformed. They are the unconscious victims of a vast intrigue, inspired by Cardinal Ceretti and M. Briand, financed from the coffers of the police and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, directed by democrats, pacifists, and other enemies of l'Action Française, and favored at Rome by German diplomacy, all-powerful now as during the war, and whose end is to depose Charles Maurras as head of the Nationalist party.

It would be a useless task in this place to enlarge upon such attacks, for American Catholics have too much common sense and too much respect for the Holy See to take them seriously. In France they have been refuted, as occasion arose, by our religious journalists and writers. Some, like Robert Cornilleau in le Petit Démocrate, have done so energetically and indignantly, congratulating the religious authority on putting an end to a scandal that had lasted overlong. Others, such as François Veuillot in la Vie Catholique, have done it with grave emotion; others again, with Bernard de Menthon in the Annales de la Jeunesse Catholique, the Jesuit fathers in Les Études and in their Dossiers de l'Action Populaire, with a perfect combination of suavity and firmness.

Most valuable of all, however, is the testimony of our archbishops and bishops who, in one form or another, have echoed the voice of the Holy Father, and repeated the old, old declaration: "Roma locuta est, causa finita est." To confine myself to but one example, but an authoritative one, Cardinal Dubois, Archbishop of Paris, in la Semaine Réligieuse of October 9, declares that the pontifical intervention gives to the episcopal action of His Eminence, Cardinal Andrieu, an authentic consecration and a universal application, that "it is the head of the Church who is speaking," and that the duty of every Catholic is to obey as a faithful son, unhesitatingly and without discussion. The documents in question, adds the Cardinal, are exclusively on the doctrinal plane; "they take cognizance of and condemn, in itself and in its consequences, a false and dangerous doctrine which is that of the chief leaders of l'Action Française."

But why need one insist upon the support and comment, full of respect, that the instructions of the Pope have found in the religious press and by the acts of the episcopate? Pius XI, in person, has condescended to explain his decision and to repel the strange motives attributed to it. On September 25, in the course of a reception to the Franciscan tertiaries of France, and in the presence of representatives of every region and of every class in the country, he took occasion to pronounce, on the subject of his letter to Cardinal Andrieu, words that leave no shadow of doubt, and of which the Osservatore Romano, two days afterward, gave this official and authentic résumé:

> The Holy Father wishes it known by all that he wrote this letter impelled solely by his awareness of the formidable, crushing, yet at the same time consoling responsibility laid upon him for the souls of all.
>
> Regarding this letter, there are some who do not appear to understand what the Pope wished to say. Let them once more read what he wrote, calmly, without prejudice, and in that spirit of filial devotion of which the Pontiff refuses even to entertain a doubt, and all will be understood.
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> Still others have the air of repeating afresh in these new circumstances, the old formula: that there is an appeal from the Pope misinformed to the Pope better instructed. The phrase is an old one, but the world keeps on repeating it. On the contrary, it must be repeated, strongly and assuredly, that what the Pope did, with the full conscience of his responsibility, and even with the risk of making a belated pronouncement, was to inform himself thoroughly, to study all that could throw light upon the circumstances, and to take no resolution which was not conformable to truth, to fitness, and to timeliness. This is the declaration from the Holy Father which he recommends the pilgrims to repeat and to circulate in the largest measure possible.

In outlining the discussion which at this moment is stirring the Catholics of France and the old world, I have made known the teaching of the Pontiff and the commentary upon it which he has himself given us. To add any comment of one's own would be presumption. Let one rather rejoice to see, once more, the Eternal Church of Christ standing aloof from purely political parties and from their excesses. Just as, formerly, Pius X admonished the partisans of Le Sillon (who submitted in all docility) that they were going too far in seeking to identify the doctrine of the Bible with that of the republic and democracy, so today, Pius XI recalls to the partisans of l'Action Française that Catholicism is not a whit the more bound to monarchical institutions, still less to materialistic theories made over from pagan antiquity.

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ARTISTOCRACY AND THE CHURCH

By MICHAEL WILLIAMS

IF SERIOUS students of Catholic church history give any attention to the curious volume* written by Mr. Cuthbert Wright and put forth as a history of the Catholic Church—although its title is less pretentious—all that need be said concerning the book's shortcomings, either as a history or as a narrative of its subject, will be said by those more competent to deal with the matter than the present writer. A few words, however, before I pass on to other aspects of Mr. Wright's book which interest me more than its value or lack of value as history, should properly be said in order to justify what is written above.

Even an amateur in the subject of Catholic church history—and few can be other than amateurs in that field: for consider the tremendous bulk of the subject matter, its multifarious ramifications, its literature in all civilized languages—can readily perceive the futility of Mr. Wright's book, considered as history. For example, he gives us a bibliography. Seventeen authors are listed. Three or four of them are Catholics. The others are such authors as Salomon Reinach, Alfred Loisy, Dean Inge, Adolph Harnack, G. P. Fisher, and other quite modern writers—modern also in the sense of being modernists when they are not Protestants or non-Christians. The only Catholic authority quoted in the bibliography who is concerned with England, which is so radically vital to the understanding of Christendom and its splitting up in the Reformation, is Monsignor Bernard Ward; admittedly an excellent writer, but where are Lingard, Gasquet, Belloc, and many others who might be named? Mr. Wright does not seem to have heard of such standard historians of the Church as Baronius, the Bollandists, Muratori, Möhler, Hergenröther, Janssen, Grisar, Ludwig von Pastor, Goyau, to name a few modern Catholic historians at random.

Perhaps all this would not so much matter if Mr. Wright did not himself profess to be writing a history. "The history of the Church is all I can undertake at this time," he says modestly. His publishers less modestly say that "all previous histories of the Catholic Church have been written either by biased pens of theologians or by the equally biased pens of the free-thinkers. Here for the first time appears a book which combines sympathy with frankness, and interprets the religious standard both of the artist and the ordinary man." There is no controlling the blurb writer, of course, so it would be time wasted to make any comment whatsoever upon the enormity of the first sentence of this quotation.

In one place in his book, Mr. Wright states that Saint Clement of Rome was the second Pope. It is true that there exists a list placing Clement before Linus and Anacletus, but surely Mr. Wright might have paid attention to the list of Popes prepared by those who probably are in a position, if any historians can be, to state the matter correctly, namely, Catholic church historians themselves. Monasticism is explained solely as a movement resulting from the determination of the only intelligent people of the early days to "escape from life," and who became monks because their "religion forbade them to commit suicide." To make a list of the many vastly important social, intellectual, and mystical movements either entirely ignored by Mr. Wright, or barely mentioned, would be to write a book at least as long as his own. Of course, in one volume, as Mr. Wright might well retort, nobody could expect a complete history of the Catholic Church. But it is as so complete a history that it appears to its publishers as superior to "all previous histories of the Catholic Church," that the book is put forward.

When Mr. Wright comes down to modern times we get a sketch of the romantic revival with Châteaubriand at its head, a few words about the Oxford Movement, a page and a half about the Vatican Council, a brief chapter on modernism, in which the Church is condemned for its condemnation of that movement, four pages about the war, written from the point of view of an exasperated pacifist who cannot understand why the Pope did not condemn the whole business, and a somewhat longer chapter with the amazing rubric of The Catholic Church in America. After a few words concerning the Jesuit and Franciscan missions in Lower California and along the Great Lakes, and a few more concerning the Catholics of Maryland, a paragraph about Father Hecker, and a bare mention of the late Cardinal Gibbons, Mr. Wright, pausing only to shake a finger of mild deprecation at the Ku Klux Klan, gives the rest of his space to an attack upon a priest because of a single statement made in a sermon, or an address, we are not told which, during the war, and a very much longer attack upon those whom Mr. Wright deems to be hostile toward the development of art.

Here we come to the real interest, indeed the true value of the singular book, which at this point I abandon to the historians, if they deem it worth their while seriously to examine its claims as history. It has an interest, and a value, quite apart from its absurd claim to consideration as history. It is really a work of art. It is a personal document, at times written with a high degree of moving beauty. It is

The Story of the Catholic Church, by Cuthbert Wright. New York: Albert and Charles Boni. $2.50.

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the confession of a soul which has been strangely moved by faith—who believes in Christ, who believes also that Christ must have founded a Church, indefectible, indestructible, absolutely authoritative; who seems at times to be almost panic-stricken by the suspicion that there is indeed such a Church, and that its centre is in Rome, but who dreams vaguely such dreams as have haunted many shadow hunters since the days of the Gnostics down to our own time, the dream of a "church within a church and also beyond it, a hidden and secret church of the initiate, a church of the spirit."

Years ago, in the columns of the New Age, when that modern knight-errant of many spiritual quests, Mr. A. R. Orage, was its editor, I wrote something to the effect that a new cult was springing up which might be termed "artistocracy." Men and women seeking God, but entranced by one of the most fascinating of His shadows, the shadow of the beauty created by architects, painters, sculptors, composers, singers, players, dancers, in all the many forms of art, have in these our bewildered modern days tended more and more to see in art the prime hope of mankind, its chief and most serious business, the standard by which all human efforts should be measured, the thing, or the spirit, that should be at once man's ideal life, his way and his goal. And more and more these men and women are becoming conscious of each other and of each other's efforts. Something like a Church of Art is being built by a thousand scattered spirits throughout the world, and toward it many, many thousands of other men and women are turning. To themselves they seem to be the superior ones. They scorn teachers, preachers, priests, governors, who, they say, all have failed. Art and the search after it, art and its enjoyment and its appreciation, art as the spirit that if yielded to and obeyed will alleviate human misery more efficaciously than anything else—this art, they proclaim, should and will be recognized as the one sure evidence of whatever divinity there may happen to be.

Mr. Orage permitted the coined term to stand. Today I think even more strongly that it is a valid one. It seems to me Mr. Cuthbert Wright is one of these artistocrats, and that his book is one of the most notable examples of the artistocratic attitude toward life.

For example, in dealing with the mediaeval period, Mr. Wright tells us that "if the thirteenth century is ultimately great, it is not because it was conspicuously happy for all its sacerdotal splendor; it is because it produced a great Catholic art under the impetus received from a religious renaissance." Quite the best chapter in his book is, Of Art and the Church—although many of the best paragraphs even in that interesting chapter seem hardly more than an English paraphrase of Huysmans, in En Route, and La Cathedrale. In his first statement, Mr. Wright ignores all the great mystics, philosophers, theologians, and, with one exception, Saint Francis, all the great religious and social reformers of the mediaeval period, a period which even today in the United States is being studied by experts in sociology, science, economics, as well as art and literature, in a score of different directions, all of them profitable to those who would not blindly return to the middle-ages, but who would utilize the vital principles which made the thirteenth century great, not only in art, but in many other phases of life which are of prime importance to mankind, despite the contemptuous attitude of the artistocrats.

While Mr. Wright's chapter on the art of the Church and many other passages of his book throughout positively glorify the Church's function in inspiring, fructifying and patronizing art, and while in a large measure he is correct in criticizing the decline of that influence in modern times, yet even on this latter ground he proves himself unequipped with adequate knowledge of his subject. He seems to know nothing, at least he says nothing, about the many notable if as yet isolated and scattered developments of originality in Catholic church architecture, in sculpture and in painting, in literature and philosophy, and above all, in the field where he displays the most indignation against what he terms the mediocrity and ugliness of modern Catholicity, namely, liturgical music. "Ask any Catholic what has happened to the Gregorian chant in our time, and you will be met with blank stares." Well, I might recommend Mr. Wright to put that question to Mrs. Justine Ward, or to visit the school of Gregorian music at Manhattanville in New York, or to visit any one of at least a dozen dioceses in the United States where Gregorian music and the music of Palestrina are being revived correctly, beautifully, and spiritually. In one word, Mr. Wright as a critic of modern Catholicism seems not to know really what is going on. His strictures upon the ugliness, the machine-made quality, the stupidity of so much of Catholic architecture, church decorations, church music, would be quite just, and really are less severe than the judgment passed by many qualified Catholics themselves, provided only that he seemed to know of the reaction against this ugliness and mediocrity, and of the notable success which the reaction has already earned, and all the multiplying signs of its advancing strength and authority.

The only Catholic writers that seem in the slightest to interest Mr. Wright are such men as Baudelaire, Arthur Rimbaud, Huysmans, writers who at their best only represent the byways and sometimes the morasses of life and literature; writers of genius, although a severely limited genius, who voice the tortured souls of modern men who lost their way and who returned through strange paths and from stranger places to the city of God. Even as art, it is all very petty.

Mr. Wright's concluding chapter, in which he tells

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us he speaks for himself, although in truth every paragraph in his book is saturated with subjectivism, is exquisitely written, and with its contrast between the "pagan rout" which he attended in New York on Christmas Eve and the midnight Mass to which he later went, it is literature, and it is something else, something more and better even than literature; it is a voice speaking out of his own heart. It is even worth while to have written a bad book in order that it might end with something so good. And it is—if Mr. Wright will not be irritated by this propagandist use of his beautiful chapter—it is also a proof of a thesis fundamental to The Commonweal, namely, that Christ and His Church more and more claim the attention and the interest of modern men, particularly the young. The Church has reawakened from a lethargy produced by the wounds of the Reformation, the French Revolution, and all the storm and stress of the modern industrial and materialistic epoch which followed.

Through all the world the banners of the Church advance. Whether men welcome the fact or repel it, or seek to deny it, the fact is patent, and Mr. Wright's book is one more proof of it. And in the very last words of that moving and eloquent last chapter he really ceases to be what I have termed him, and what he actually is through the bulk of his curious volume, namely, the affected and rather self-conscious artistocrat. For he says that "This book began with Jesus, and must end with Him. He is alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Like the mother of François Villon in the ballade, we know nothing but this, 'and in this faith, we wish to live and die.' He can do nothing for those who say 'they have need of nothing, and know not that they are wretched and miserable and blind and naked.' It is rather with the poor and unpretentious and disinherited of life that He delighted Himself when He was with us in the world; and perhaps also with him who desires to believe, who sees far off the heavenly lights of the Church to which he may never attain, who after all his wanderings has not yet reached home."

Yes, for even artistocracy, on these terms, can be included, with all other interests, and all sorts and conditions of men, in the Catholic Church.

FASCISM IN PRACTICE

By JOHN A. RYAN

(This is the second of two articles on aspects of Fascism, by Dr. John A. Ryan of the Catholic University of America, the first appearing in the issue of November 17.—The Editors.)

IN THE field of methods, Fascism seems to have exemplified the teaching of Machiavelli, from whom, according to Signor Rocco, it has "learned, not only its doctrines, but its actions as well. . . . To liberate Italy and to make her more powerful he would use any means, for to his mind the holiness of the end justified the means." Fascist leaders have proved themselves apt pupils of this cynical master.

The restrictions upon political liberty and self-government enacted by the Mussolini régime exemplify that element in Fascist theory which "rejects the dogma of popular sovereignty and substitutes for it that of state sovereignty, . . . and entrusts the normal control of the commonwealth to a selected élite." Accordingly, the election laws have been changed in the interest of a compact Fascist minority. In place of proportional representation, which is the fairest method yet devised of giving to all classes and interests a legislative representation in proportion to their numbers, the Fascist government has substituted an arrangement whereby the party receiving a mere plurality in a parliamentary election becomes thereby entitled to two-thirds of the members of the Chamber of Deputies. Under the authority of this election law, it will be possible for the Fascist organization to control the Italian legislature and government long after it has ceased to include a majority of the voters. Such a condition could be prevented only through the combination of all the non-Fascist political elements in a single party.

About a year ago, legislation was passed greatly extending the power of the prime minister. He is now responsible only to the king. He can continue in office despite the opposition of the Parliament. He nominates the other cabinet ministers, determines their number and their several functions, and decides matters upon which they disagree. In case of absence or prevention from fulfilling his duties, the prime minister designates the cabinet member who is to act as his substitute.

A further extension of the prime minister's executive power is seen in the laws enacted at the beginning of the year 1926, and recently made more inclusive, which abolish mayors and councils in practically every commune throughout Italy, and substitute instead an executive, called a podesta, appointed by the central government. Rome and Naples are exempted from the podesta system, but apparently are at present ruled by appointees of the central government. This wholesale abolition of local self-government is defended by the Mussolini régime on the ground that the former system was incompetent. "The reinvigoration of the communal governmental organism, therefore, can only be accomplished by the work

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of the state." In other words, efficiency is to be attained through despotic and benevolent compulsion rather than through the civic education of the local communities. Through these extraordinary powers the will of the prime minister is virtually absolute in the field of administration.

It is also exceptionally great in the province of legislation. Neither the Chamber of Deputies nor the Senate can consider any matter without his consent. He has the power to ask that any bill rejected by one of the legislative houses be voted upon again after a period of three months or that it be transferred to the other house, examined, and voted upon. His power to legislate by decree has been clearly defined and greatly expanded.

Much as we may dislike these restrictions upon political liberty, we cannot say that they are contrary to the moral law or constitute a violation of individual rights. Any form of government which promotes the common good and the welfare of individuals may be legitimate, at least so long as it enjoys some kind of consent of the governed. There is no natural right either to vote or to hold office. Nor is there anything in the nature of human beings or in the nature of the existing Fascist constitution which prevents the proper ends of government from being attained. If the Italian people are satisfied with this kind of political constitution, no rational objection can be raised by those who are not Italians.

Are the Italian people satisfied? Perhaps they are, but we have no certainty that this is the fact. We cannot rely entirely upon the favorable reports made by returning American tourists who casually observed conditions in a few Italian cities but who failed to note the coercive powers of the Fascist militia in the background, the suppression of free speech and a free press.

According to an editorial in a recent issue of an exceptionally well-informed Catholic weekly, "the great majority of the Italian peasants and workers are opposed to the Fascist régime; but they are held down by Fascist bayonets and able to make their voices heard only with the greatest difficulty." If this statement is correct, the downfall of the Fascist government is nearer than most outside observers have considered probable.

Whatever may be the truth about the present attitude of the Italian people, there is one apology for the Fascist political constitution which is devoid of solid foundation. It is that this is the kind of government that best suits the Italian people, since they are not capable of maintaining genuine democratic and representative political institutions. For centuries, a similar assertion was made by the apologists for British rule in Ireland. Indeed, such has been the facile excuse offered by tyrants, autocrats and Tories in every age for denying self-government to any people. In view of the numerous situations in which it has been proved false, it ought never to be accepted without careful examination and specific evidence. All the indications point to the conclusion that the charge of political incapacity against the Italians is nothing short of a cruel libel upon a nation which is the equal in native intelligence of any other people in the world. Owing to events and vicissitudes in their history, which need not here be recounted, the Italian people may be less advanced than some others in political training and education. At the present time, they may be less ready for efficient self-government; but the remedy is time and education and opportunity to make and profit by their own mistakes. Any other theory assumes that they are mere children. In this democratic age, it is very doubtful that a permanent or safe political régime can be maintained on the basis of this extraordinary assumption.

However, it is not the diminution of political liberty which gives most concern to friends of Italy and believers in human rights. The greatest offenses committed against liberty by the Fascist government have taken place in the civic sphere. Several laws have been enacted which exactly illustrate the Fascist theory, as stated by Signor Rocco, that liberty is a concession of the state, that individuals are means to the interests of the state, and that there should be no such civic institution as a bill of rights. Following are some of the enactments which have greatly curtailed important liberties of the individual in Italy:

"Whoever offends the premier by word or act is punished with imprisonment for a term of from six to thirty months and a fine of from 500 to 3,000 lire."

Does "offends by word" mean merely verbal criticism? If it does, this law would seem to be unique in modern times. It aims at making impossible even intelligent and constructive criticism of the prime minister's official acts. Its enormity can be easily grasped if we assume that a similar prohibition "protected" the President of the United States.

Something over a year ago, a law was enacted providing that "all associations, organizations, and institutions . . . must communicate to the police their charters, statutes, and internal regulations, the list of their activities and of their members, and all other information pertaining to their organization and activities whenever, in the interest of order and security, it is required by the authorities."

It is well known that this measure was directed at the order of Freemasons, which through secret methods, had frequently been guilty of illegal and revolutionary political activities. Obviously, a government is justified in opposing and punishing such conduct and even in dissolving organizations which are persistently guilty of it, if they refuse to reform themselves. Nevertheless, the law just mentioned seems to be unnecessarily drastic and to constitute an unjustifiable interference with freedom of association. Apparently, it would apply to the Knights of Columbus

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and other fraternal organizations quite as injuriously as it does to the Freemasons.

It is in industrial relations, however, that the right of association has suffered the greatest restrictions and injuries. While Italian wage-earners may continue to maintain their own kind of unions, they may not use them for industrial purposes. By the provisions of a law enacted in December, 1925, only legally recognized associations may enter agreements with employers concerning wages or any other term or condition of employment. In each kind of establishment or industry, only one employee-organization and only one employer-organization may receive the required legal recognition. Organizations become eligible for recognition as soon as they include, respectively, 10 percent of the workers in a given category and district and the employers of 10 percent of the employees in a given class and jurisdiction. To these recognized organizations all employees and employers, respectively, must contribute the regular dues, whether or not they are enrolled as members. In the workers' organizations, all dues are collected by the simple device of deducting them from wages; in other words, by means of the "check-off." No person can become a member unless he can show "satisfactory political affiliation from a national point of view."

This is a euphemism for adhesion to the political party of Fascism. The officers of the organizations must be distinguished for their "ability, morality, and national loyalty"; i.e., fidelity to the political administration. While the officers are elected by the members, their designation does not become effective until it is approved by the national government. Furthermore, the government may actively supervise the organizations, depose their officers, and revoke their legal recognition.

Collective agreements made between recognized organizations of employers and employees are legally binding, not only upon the contracting parties, but upon all the employers and workers of the class and district involved. Strikes and lockouts are forbidden, and compulsory arbitration of all collective disputes is enforced through special labor magistrates appointed by the government.

Freedom of organization and of economic action has, therefore, been so restricted and mutilated that Italian wage-earners must support unions which are completely controlled by the government, must deal with their employers through these unions alone, must never quit work by concerted action, and must abide by the decisions of a political tribunal which is provided with no industrial code or more definite standard than a vague and elastic "equity." The arbitration body is required to "weigh the interests of the employers against those of the workers, and in each case to take into account the higher interests of production." Modern times have not produced a more effective instrument of industrial and political enslavement. It enforces consistently and completely the theory, as set forth by Signor Rocco: "Fascists make of the individual an economic instrument for the advancement of society, an instrument which they use so long as it functions and which they subordinate when no longer serviceable."

The constitution of these pseudo-labor unions is in sharp contrast with what Pope Leo XIII says about the "natural right of man to enter a private society," about the duty of the state "not to violate the rights of individuals and not to impose unreasonable regulations under the pretense of public benefit," and about the "general and lasting law, that workingmen's associations should be so organized and governed that each individual member may better his condition to the utmost in body, mind, and property."

As to freedom of speech, it is well known that, whether by official or unofficial means, with or without the forms of legality, the opportunity to give public expression to political opinions is strictly limited.

Freedom of the press is narrowly and definitely restricted by the law promulgated on December 31, 1925. Every newspaper and periodical must appoint a director who becomes responsible for the contents, and who must be registered as a professional journalist. He is also required to obtain the sanction of the state's attorney of the Court of Appeals in whose jurisdiction the paper is published. In as much as this authorization can, apparently, be given or withheld at will by the state's attorney, this provision is by itself an effective bar to real freedom of the press.

According to another section of the law, the prefects, who are appointees of the central government, "are empowered to seize editions of newspapers which attack the government in its foreign policy, or which injure national credit at home or abroad, or which alarm the people without justification." It would not be easy to conceive a legal enactment calculated more effectively to destroy utterly the liberty of printed expression in political matters.

The foregoing assaults upon civil liberty are either curiously overlooked or deliberately ignored by the American apologists for the Fascist régime. The majority of the apologists lay great stress upon the uncontested reforms which Mussolini has brought about in public administration, particularly in the protection of property and the enforcement of public order. In view of these achievements, they maintain that the curtailment of political liberty, of representative government, deserves very little emphasis—or perhaps should find a place on the credit side of the Fascist ledger. If the apologists were at once honest and cognizant of the facts, they would realize that no evaluation of the present régime in Italy is adequate which does not give due consideration to its destruction of such fundamental civil liberties as freedom of association, of speech, and of the press. The precision and thoroughness which distinguish the opera-

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tion of the press censorship in Italy are neatly illustrated in the following Associated Press despatch, dated Rome, November 2, 1926: "Twelve opposition newspapers and two magazines were suspended from publication today, and the licenses of three others were revoked by prefectural decree. This represents the first formidable stroke in the campaign of severity against the opponents of Fascism."

A few of the Mussolini apologists reluctantly admit that some diminution of civil liberty, some injury to individual rights, has occurred under the régime of Fascism. But they seem not to have taken the trouble to explore its extent. If they are called upon either to defend or to condemn the laws in restraint of individual rights, they evade the issue by expressing the hope that this legislation is only temporary and will be repealed as soon as the Italian people have learned how to refrain from abusing civil liberties.

This pious aspiration seems to be utterly devoid of rational or experimental foundation. Its only basis is two extraordinary assumptions. According to the first, men who have a fairly long and constant tradition of liberty will, during the few years allotted to a dictatorship in the modern era, docilely learn through deprivation of liberty not to misuse liberty when it again comes into their possession. What principle of psychology and what historical instance can be adduced to give this assumption the color of probability? The second assumption seems to be even more improbable than the first. It is that politicians who have ruled despotically, as Mussolini and his associates have ruled, and who have deliberately adopted the autocratic doctrine set forth by Signor Rocco, will soon willingly restore to the people the liberties that they have taken away. Again, I ask, where is the warrant for this in human history or psychology?

Very apposite here are some words uttered at the end of March, 1925, by the brilliant priest and social reformer, Don Luigi Sturzo, who was the leader of the Italian Popular party until he found it no longer safe to remain in his native country:

> "Of such illusions the political history of nations is full; and it is astonishing that men who in other respects are very intelligent, should cherish them. Is it likely that a political party noted for its systematic violation of civil and political liberty . . . will terminate, spontaneously, by a logical and historical process, by internal necessity, in a régime of legality, morality, and liberty?

All the precedents and all the probabilities seem to warn us that after Fascism will come the deluge. The reaction is likely to be worse than the evils that Fascism found when it began its violent and tyrannical course. Political communities do not learn the art of government by short cuts or by forcibly imposed instruction. When the Italians have unlearned, in turmoil and tears, the compulsory lessons received during the Fascist régime, they will have to begin anew the slow process of education in self-government.

COMMUNICATIONS

ON NATIONAL DEFENSE

Buffalo, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—All Americans worthy of the name must greatly regret the recent announcement of President Coolidge that he is opposed to the use of arms by our young men who are receiving military training in our schools, colleges, and civilian camps. It would seem that to teach military tactics without the use of arms would be very much like teaching golf without golf-sticks, or baseball without baseball bats. It would seem, too, that the inevitable result of teaching military tactics without the use of arms would be to change military training into mere physical training, and thereby emasculate this very important branch of our service, and speedily cause its complete disintegration. This training in our schools, colleges, and civilian camps has proved of incalculable value in developing the health, manhood, and patriotism of our young men, and must always create a better quality of citizenship. No nation in history ever became militaristic by training for self-defense. For centuries Switzerland has trained all her men, and she of all the nations of Europe has always been practically free from war.

These civilian components trained in the schools, colleges, and civilian camps, are the right arm of our defense system, as they are the source of supply of the reserve officers who, in case of war, will train our millions of drafted men, while our regular army and National Guard are protecting continental America and our foreign possessions. The pacifists, who for five years past have been working ceaselessly to undermine our whole system of national defense, as established by our Defense Act of 1920, are now making a special drive against all military training in our schools and colleges.

Purely in my capacity as a private citizen concerned in the welfare of my country, I have recently been making a study of the conditions of our national defense, and I have been profoundly shocked to find that our whole military establishment is greatly crippled as a result of the continuous cutting of appropriations ever since 1921, and that we are only slightly better off than we were in 1917 when we became involved in the world war. It appears from recent annual reports of the Secretary of War, that from lack of funds our regular army has been cut down nearly one hundred thousand since 1921, and is greatly disheartened and crippled in all its activities; that our National Guard and civilian components are unable to expand; that our seacoast and great seacoast cities are protected by obsolete guns; that we are without modern airplanes; without ammunition reserves at home or in our foreign garrisons, and that in case of war it would take us practically a year to train and equip our army, and to provide it with arms, ammunition, and airplanes.

In his first message to Congress on December 6, 1923, President Coolidge stated: "For several years we have been decreasing the personnel of the army and navy and reducing their power to the danger point. Further reductions should not be made."

However, since 1923 the appropriations for the army have been reduced each year, and by a total of over fifty millions of dollars, and the appropriations for next year are the lowest in five years.

It would seem that instead of further weakening the structure of national defense, we should be taking very active steps to strengthen it. For three years past we have been on the

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verge of a rupture with Mexico. During that time over a score of American citizens have been ruthlessly murdered, and hundreds who had invested their all in little homes in Mexico have seen them confiscated; and American investors who in good faith have put over a billion dollars into the development of the oil and mineral resources of Mexico face the threat of the Mexican government to take over these properties without compensation. Our protests are ignored. This means that the time will speedily come when the American people will demand that an end be put to these intolerable conditions, and that force be substituted for diplomacy.

Our bitter experience in all our major wars has taught us that it is folly to neglect the vital matter of national defense. Adequate national defense will cost us only $4.00 per capita per year. By our present parsimony we are saving the paltry sum of $2.00 per capita per year, and thereby imperiling our national safety which means our lives, our liberties, and our wealth. National defense is cheap at any price.

FRANK H. CALLAN.

CHURCH AND STATE IN MEXICO

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor:—In an otherwise excellent book recently published (Calcutt's Church and State in Mexico: 1822-1857) a statement is made concerning Mexico which is often brought forward, especially by denominational missionaries, and commonly misunderstood. In describing good qualities of the elements which composed the Liberal party in the struggle preceding the adoption of the Constitution of 1857, he says: "In recent times, and it is logical to conclude that the same was the case in the early nineteenth century, illegitimacy has been lower in mestizo communities than among their neighbors." I offer the suggestion that there is no logic in the conclusion. In the early nineteenth century, marriage, to Mexicans—with the exception of portions of the "Liberal" element—was a sacrament, performed by a priest. There was no illegitimacy except by aberration.

Today, marriage under the law is also a civil contract performed by a civil functionary. Catholics such as those to whom the author obviously refers, the Indian population, still consider marriage to be a sacrament and refuse to recognize civil marriage as more than a registration after sacramental marriage. In those many places where there is no priest, they often celebrate marriage by solemn espousals in the presence of both families, remaining certainly as faithful to the vows taken as many of their northern critics.

To the state their children are illegitimate, being sanctioned neither by priest nor by magistrate. The author's statement is true according to official statistics. It proves nothing with regard to former days; it indicates nothing about "a higher moral standard and a better family life" in comparison with groups who recognize civil marriage only.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

FASHIONS IN WORDS

Norwalk, Conn.

TO the Editor:—A few seasons ago, we were amused with Fashions in Men. In the current Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, we are diverted with fashions in women. If we may judge from our own sadness on the first of the month, when a plethoric check-book sheds its leaves, thereby making inroads on a none too overnourished bank balance, we have, alack, always with us fashions in hats, cloaks, furs, groceries, and all other products of those actively engaged in the conspiracy against gentlemen. Truly, we meet Mr. and Mrs. Fashion or their innumerable progeny everywhere.

It is not surprising, then, that we have fashions in words; more specifically, in the words used by some of our contemporary literary critics. At one time, "nuance" held sway. "Incredible" supplanted it, only to be in turn displaced by "amazing." "Gallic salt" seasoned criticism for many months. At present, lusty life has been given to "awareness." This latter butterfly is about ready to go to winter quarters. Out of the chrysalis, to be popularized by fashion, will emerge some other daughter of either Mr. Webster or Papa Roget. Each critic will claim her. She will be coaxed, caressed, and finally kicked into the oblivion of the commonplace. There, she will be locked within the arms of "So's your old man." The process amuses us, but is it criticism?

D. T. POWELL.

THE LATE EUGENE DEBS

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor:—I liked your editorial reference to the late Eugene Debs. He always seemed to me to stand apart from the rest of the socialist-communist-revolutionary group in one most important respect—a respect indeed absolutely fundamental. With him, so I think, love of the oppressed and unfortunate, and not hatred of the oppressor and the privileged, was the motive power.

Herein lies the distinction between true and false "liberalism," true and false "reform," and fruitful and sterile "agitation" for betterment of social conditions. With the vast majority of the "radicals" the world over, love of "humanity" invariably utters itself in hatred of some human beings, love of "liberty" issues in acts of tyranny, love of "truth" expresses itself in multitudinous falsehoods, love of "justice" takes the form of glaring inequities, and an all-absorbing "pity" invariably ends in acts of the most atrocious cruelty.

That is why the death of Debs affects us in a manner essentially different from the deaths of —— (readers can supply the names for themselves!) I will merely observe that I know no exponent of "radical" thought in this country who in this respect may be classed with Debs.

THOMAS F. WOODLOCK.

BLASPHEMY AND BOLSHEVISM

Garrison, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—After reading two of the contributions to The Commonweal of October 20, 1926, namely, The Consequences of Chaos, by Theodore F. MacManus, and God and Mammon, by Reverend Raymond Vernimont, it would be quite just to say that, in spite of its Blasphemy and Bolshevism (same issue) Russia is not such an exclusively bad country.

REV. P. CHUBAROFF.

A CORRECTION

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor:—Owing to an unfortunate error in my manuscript, The Doctrine of Fascism, which appeared in The Commonweal of November 17, the word "social" occurs in the last line of the first column, page 43. That sentence should read: "For this reason, not for reasons of individual welfare, Fascism recognizes the right of private property."

REV. JOHN A. RYAN.

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POEMS

Valley of the Vanished Kings

All night the thundering of horsemen fills
The valley-floor with music. All night long
The hemlocks hear the hoof-beats' hammering song
Of ancient glory soar above the hills.

Sometimes, on misty nights, a moon of bronze
Descends the granite walls to spill dark fire
On coats of mail, splashed deep with blood and mire—
Troop touching troop, on steaming stallions.

Far off, between blue chains of iron trees,
When winds are black as death, and rain-throats roar,
Some say a giant rides the valley-floor,
Himself and charger gold from head to knees;

And back of him, ten thousand horsemen bold—
Their silver swords and corselets gleaming clear—
Advance and pass, and thunderously veer
In clash of battle-practice as of old.

All night the valley shivers—stone on stone.
And men have said a Face peers down the sky,
Bleeding, yet radiant, thorn-crowned on high,
Reviewing these stern hosts of steel and bone . . .

All night they ride, salute that Face and pass,
Leaving at dawn no trace upon the grass.

J. Corson Miller.

Fugitive

I could not hold
This burning love
Within my heart
Before the gaze of men . . .
They would not understand
Its youth . . .
They would scourge its slenderness . . .
Bending their knee in mockery
Before its faith . . .
Crowning the tenderness and the yearning
Of its love with deep derision.

I fly . . .
Holding this burning love
Within my heart
From the hands that crucify!

Margaret Lee Keyting.

Cosmic Bad Manners

High in the rooftree of this ancient house
A cruel wind worries a creaking rafter;
Lightning runs through the room like a silver mouse
With thunder, a furious housewife, pounding after.

They are abroad tonight, the people of storm,
With their wild ways and never so much as "Please"
Or a thought of us, all huddled to keep warm,
And hoping they'll leave the roof and the apple-trees!

Mavis McIntosh.

The Strange Island of Thorn

Down on the Island of Thorn
Nothing ever was born—
Down on the Island of Thorn.
And oh, that place
Was a very strange place . . .
All of the trees
Wore heavy moss lace,
And those trees were dead—
Those trees were dead.
On the limbs
Away from the wind
Perched red-eyed birds,
And they were blind—
They were blind.
Still waters lay
In dark lagoons,
And soft white fish
Like wilted moons
Floated there,
But never swam—
Never swam.
All was silent,
Even the morn,
And all was old,
For nothing was born
Down on the Island of Thorn.

Irene Stewart.

Thanksgiving Song

In the twilight, in the violet-covered twilight,
I descended to the autumn sea;
Burned one planet, one irradiant planet,
Over me.

All the waves, the murmuring waves of ocean,
Seemed in surging harmonies to sing
Their praise-song, their song that mounted skyward,
Triumphing.

And the land, the tufted dunes about me,
Echoed, lifting rhythmic voices far,
Raised hosannas, clear wind-borne hosannas,
To the star.

"Years may sunder," chanted they, "may sever,
We united and in one accord
Cry thanksgiving ever, ever,
To the Lord!"

Clinton Scollard.

In a Wood

Air that once was breath of Thine,
Rain that lavéd limbs divine,
Earth that did Thy body make:
Something must of Thee partake.
Small red fox and springing hare,
Birds, and all wild creatures, share
Glory that the angels wear.

Judith Acton.

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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

Saturday Night

THE courageous adventure of Miss Eva Le Gallienne in establishing at the old Fourteenth Street Theatre a first-class repertory company at popular prices has probably attracted more attention in New York theatrical circles than any other event of this season—and rightfully so. Whatever the prevailing or one's own personal opinion of Miss Le Gallienne's ability as an actress, and whatever judgment may finally be passed upon her season, she has already accomplished something of which no one can deprive her. Where others have talked and hoped and complained, she has acted. Everyone has lamented the high box-office prices in New York. At the Civic Repertory Theatre, the top price, tax included, is $1.65. For the Wednesday matinees, this is reduced to $1.10, with gallery seats at thirty-five cents. Everyone has complained of hit or miss acting and the lack of acting opportunities for fine talent. Miss Le Gallienne has provided a program of first-class plays, opening her season by two different plays on successive nights, and immediately adding others. Here is accomplishment and pioneering effort worthy of profound respect and honest tribute.

One of the first plays chosen for presentation under this new scheme was Saturday Night, the translation of a play by Jacinto Benavente. Two others, which will be reviewed later, were the Three Sisters, by Tchekhov, and Ibsen's John Gabriel Borkman. The Benavente play is not, perhaps, the happiest of selections, in spite of one act, the third, which reaches a magnificent height of theatrical climax. The play as a whole is one of those Graustarkian stories of an imaginary empire which could only attain importance and interest through an amazingly skilful building up of character and human values. This Benavente has not done. The story is discursively told in five acts, with only small success in sustaining emotional interest and with a confusion of detail and a brevity of motivation which drape it with the pall of artificiality. Briefly, an artist's model has risen through energy and will to a point where she controls the destinies of an empire. Then her past, in the form of a daughter, comes back to plague and torment her, giving her a choice between maternal instinct and the fulfilment of her ambitions. A murder, the death of the daughter and the renunciation of the sculptor who first started her toward fame, finally clear her path. The unreality of the empire of Suavia and the failure to give to this woman's problems the searching human treatment which might have made them plausible, combine to give hollowness to the play, and to make one feel toward it the supreme indifference that is associated with the older opera librettos.

This makes it doubly hard to appraise the work of the company and of Miss Le Gallienne herself in the principal rôle and as director. For it is worth noting, in comparison, let us say, with Walter Hampden's efforts, that Miss Le Gallienne has followed his unfortunate example in trying to act and direct at the same time. The principle of this is fundamentally unsound. It puts the actor-director in the false position of instructing others and being himself above instruction. And among actors, it is only the occasional genius of a century who has that acute quality of self-criticism which enables him without direction to avoid the faults, the mannerisms, and the exaggerations which are the actor's greatest menace.

Miss Le Gallienne is patently not a genius. She is a hard-working, courageous and intelligent actress, with native talent, good physical and vocal equipment, and a real theatre sense. But this is not an uncommon endowment these days. One could easily name five or six actresses of equal or greater natural ability, and certainly two or three with a markedly greater emotional gift. Miss Le Gallienne needs, then, and needs badly, the drawing out, the development and the discipline which come from expert and understanding direction. So far as one can judge from her performance in Saturday Night, her work already shows signs of deterioration since her memorable performance in Liliom. Her emotional moments are fragile and occasionally futile. Her gestures have become dislocated and spasmodic. Her facial mannerisms, particularly a certain twist of the mouth, have become annoying. And her voice has lost that restrained intensity which helped to make her, in Liliom, a figure of high tragedy.

Of her work in directing the other members of the long cast, it is unfair to judge too severely so early in a season that must have involved many trials and distractions. But the movement of the play and the grouping of several difficult scenes suggests a need for greater compactness and less scattering of attention. The third act, in a tavern, which closes with the murder of a prince and the mad dancing of a tarantella during a police raid, stands out as the one moment of the play where Miss Le Gallienne has achieved true theatrical magic. This scene is swift, violent, and comes with splendid impact.

The real value of the other members of the permanent company can only be judged from the vesatility shown in subsequent performances. Beatrice Terry is fairly amusing but quite unconvincing as a fickle countess. The most distinguished bit of secondary work was Leona Roberts's portrait of an ancient and broken courtesan whose last days are spent in the gloom of a disreputable tavern. Ruth Wilton as the daughter was rather colorless, though showing a certain sensitive fluttering quality which might develop into something of real interest in a more authentic play. The men, almost without exception, were incompetent and wooden. Perhaps it is not unfair to say that they, too, would do better with a firmer directing hand.

Loose Ends

HERE is a play of distinct and distinguished quality, in which Dion Titherage, the author, takes the leading part and also, by happy choice, directs with considerable success. It is best to say at the outset that the play is strong medicine. It does not mince words, and makes full use of the freedom of speech so characteristic of the recent type of play. But it does so with a sincerity of feeling and honesty of purpose so patent—and often so poignant—as to relieve it of the charge of deliberate sensation-mongering. It is a plain and bold indictment of the habits of mind and the twisted views bred by our post-war civilization, distasteful at many times because the people it is describing are distasteful, but for the main part constructive because of the earnest fight

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which one man carries through the play, and carries to success, against this very sordidness.

Nina Grant, an actress, marries Malcolm Forres on short acquaintance. She is puzzled by his strange aloofness from her own world and what she considers his naïve views, but does not suspect the cause. When she does find out, later, that the reason for his Rip Van Winkle strangeness is fifteen years' imprisonment for murder, she is afraid to face the social consequences. In the meantime, her friend, Brenda Fallon, has fallen deeply in love with Forres, but is too loyal to admit it to him or anyone else. In his distress he turns to her and then discovers her feeling. She, too, is a product of the times, curiously amoral, and offers to help him give his wife a divorce if the latter insists. This breaks the last of his illusions. It is not until his wife is won over by the sheer strength of his love, and a realization that the murder was in an access of rage against a man who had ruined his sister, that hope begins to dawn. He then learns that with all her faults, Brenda Fallon had loved him unselfishly and that her greatest desire was to see him restored to his wife. He also learns that beneath her surface veneer, his wife has the stuff of true and fearless devotion.

It might be argued that too much sympathy is won for Brenda Fallon, but I am inclined to think that Mr. Titheradge has shown unusual artistic integrity in displaying her for just what she is, a girl whose mistaken views are born to the current loose thinking of the day, but whose finer sensibilities, whose loyalties and spirit of self-sacrifice and renunciation are of the fine women of all time. This part is acted with superb intuition by Molly Kerr. Malcolm Forres, acted by Mr. Titheradge himself, is also a finely moving characterization of a man tortured by the effort to adapt himself to new and false values in life, and eventually, through earnestness and courage, winning the honest forthright love he had sought. Violet Heming as Nina, the wife, does her best work in many years. In spite of its frank speech and situations, this is a much sounder play than many of those whose speech is irreproachable, but whose implications are destructive.

The Ramblers

IT HAS been said—and not always by the press agents—that Clark and McCollough in The Ramblers offered more compacted fun than any combination since the Marx Brothers. Well—perhaps; and again, probably not! A good deal of the fun is vulgar fun; much of it is uninspired slapstick, and only here and there does it sparkle. The music is fairly good without much originality.

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BOOKS

The Reformation in Dublin, by Myles V. Ronan. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $7.50.

FATHER RONAN'S monograph upon the sorry beginnings of Protestantism in Ireland has all the air of breaking new ground, and very hard and stubborn ground at that. History and politics in Ireland have always been interchangeable terms. From the day of Giraldus Cambrensis to the day of Piggott, the arts of the interpolator and the forger have been busy, seeking to justify to the world the most shameless and the most persistent denials of justice with which the records of any great nation are disgraced. It is not necessary to labor a point which respectable historians now admit. But it is edifying to find the author of The Reformation in Dublin, in a foreword, advising his readers that a Life of Archbishop Browne, which has formed the backbone of the five main histories of the period has now been shown, by the discovery of original documents, to be an entirely spurious collection printed to feed religious bigotry during the anti-Popery scare of 1678. "Ex uno disce omnes."

What was the real reason for the failure of the Reformation in Ireland? The theory of a racial repugnance of the Celt to the German reformed doctrines will hardly do. From no country did the light of faith disappear so completely as from neighboring Wales and Cornwall. Even the resistance of the Scottish Highlanders, save in the extreme west, was partial and did not outlast a century and a half. Neither will the fact that the new religion came from England, with English governors to enforce it and English speech as its medium altogether explain the instant and permanent hostility it aroused. The identification of nationality and religion was doubtless to become complete later. But its date must be set a good many years further on. Nothing is more surprising among the many surprising facts of which Father Ronan informs us than the unworthy complaisance of the Celtic aristocracy and episcopate to Henry's claims to be the supreme head of the Church in Ireland as well as in England, and the difficulties encountered by envoys from Rome in getting a footing, even in parts of the country where the English warrant did not run. What we are facing, as we read one despatch after another to London telling of empty churches, of old sanctuaries turned into inns, of parishes without pastors, and of sermons preached to rocks and trees, is the spectacle of a boycott of the new religion carried out by peasants and common people on a national scale which was not only to fasten upon Protestantism in Ireland for all time the stigma of oppression and proselytism, but eventually to bring the unworthy leaders of their own race back into the martyr ranks. "The majority of Irish chieftains," says Father Ronan, "seem to have cared a great deal for land and titles, and were ready enough to accept the king's ecclesiastical polity. . . . But with the people it was different. It was not for their interest that tribal lands should be turned into private estates, nor could they hope for special marks of royal favor. In the austerity and self-denial of the friars they could discern a higher light than that provided by Henry VIII and his grasping officials. Against the friars Henry had no available weapon; they could not even be prevented from preaching. Under the very shadow of Dublin Castle the king could bring no peace to his 'reformed' church. . . . On the side of Rome were ranged popular feeling, religious tradition, the faith handed down to them through generations, and these had the support of crowds of devoted men who could exhort the people in their own

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tongue and whose example was sometimes more eloquent than their words." As early as 1550 "priests and people had . . . begun to hold their services in secret places, in order to preserve their Mass intact."

The picture of Ireland of the Reformation epoch which Father Ronan gives us is that of a terribly upheaved country, and contemporary letters which he quotes tell us why. It is plain that English policy was at the end of its first phase of bankruptcy. The Pale had been pushed back to within a few miles of Dublin, and the Englishry were practically in a state of siege. One castle and fortified manor after another had been abandoned. "Even the Archbishop's other manor of Shankhill was made useless for him by the raids of the mountain clans." In 1548 "here in Dublin it is reported the Dublin soldiers are like to perish for lack of food." A positive exodus of farmers of English stock seems to have been under way. A letter from Robert Cowley, Master of the Rolls, to Cromwell in 1537, laments the condition of "the poor English earth-tillers in the English pale, who cannot skill upon penury nor wretchedness as the Irish tenants do sustain" and who are being "driven hither into England and Wales, and the Irish tenants in their rooms and farms." The tendency to ascribe some superhuman and baffling quality of persistence to the Celtic stock appears again and again. Even Gray, by no means the worst of the terrible deputies sent over by England, and who paid for his moderation later with his head, uses it to dissuade his government from what was evidently a scheme of massacre in cold blood conceived after the revolt of the O'Neills.

"The land is as large as England," reports Gray, "too large to be altogether inhabited anew, and the total extirpation of the Irish would be very difficult, considering the lack of inhabiters and the hardships these Irishmen can endure."

This sturdiness of the Irish constitution may well be regarded, by those who do not know on what manna from heaven they have been fed, as their racial salvation. But its immediate consequence, as with the Indians of Puritan America, was to have them regarded by the comfort-loving English settlers, as something a little less than human, and explains much of the inhumanity exercised in their regard.

George Browne, the first Protestant Archbishop of Dublin is the villain of the drab story that Father Ronan has to tell. An apostate prior of the Augustinian Priory in London, a lick-spittle and spy of Thomas Cromwell from the first, Browne was rewarded for his work in bringing about the suppression of the friars' houses in England by the see of Saint Lawrence O'Toole. It is interesting, in view of the "low" and evangelical tone of the Anglican church in Ireland down to our own days, to note that Browne's religious "convictions" at the time of his appointment to Dublin, were far in advance of what was safe in England and that his affiliations, like those of his master and the wily Cranmer, were with Bucer, Zwingli and the German Protestants generally. Stokesley, Bishop of London, calls him a "railing friar," both Ormond and Gray despised him and made no secret of their contempt, and his own master beset him by spies.

In any case, Browne's instructions were clear, and, so long as they were carried out in the political sphere, considerable latitude in the dogmatic seems to have been left him. He was to suppress, on any pretexts that might seem best to him, the religious houses in Dublin and throughout Ireland, turn over such of their property as could be realized upon to the English crown, and come to what arrangements were feasible for the distribution of their real estate among a host of greedy placemen and officials. As has always been the case with English rule in Ireland, even the façade of decency that has masked oppressive acts in the larger country, was abandoned, as though not worth the trouble of justifying. "It is worthy of note," says Father Ronan, "that the king gave no reason such as Cowley advanced, for the suppression of the religious houses. He simply says that he is entitled to their property." For the rest, those who could feather their nests at the expense of the old agencies of civilization and humanity were welcome to the pickings, on the one easy condition that they should consider themselves a "garrison" for the government at London. The dualism of Irish social life that is to be the country's bane for nearly four centuries begins. A jackal peerage of Allens, Brownes, Cowleys, Brabazons, St. Legers, and Cavendishes, meaner and more rapacious, if possible, than their brethren in England who had fattened on ruined abbeys and priories, takes hold of the land. In our own day we have seen the curses come to roost and the dragons' teeth abundantly harvested.

In his foreword, Father Ronan modestly states his purpose in writing this first authoritative story of the Reformation in Ireland. "It would have been much easier for me," he tells us, "to have written a more popular book, but then it would have been less valuable." As we read on, and begin to realize the self-sacrifice and labor that went to make it a documented history, we are divided between respect for the learned parish priest who, by virtue of a single book, takes rank among the authorities whom every serious student of the period will have to consult, and the obscure and anonymous populace whose share in defeating the Reformation, with all its inheritance of materialism, industrialism and social injustice, he chronicles. It was their instinct for truth, he makes it quite clear, their determination to seek first the kingdom of God, and accept nothing in its place, which has kept Ireland Irish and kept it Catholic to our own day.

HENRY LONGAN STUART.

Islam and the Divine Comedy, by Miguel Asin. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $5.00.

FOR 600 years Dante's claim to originality, "the sea I sail has never yet been passed," remained unchallenged by any serious writer. The so-called "precursors" of the Divine Comedy, such as the sixth book of Virgil, Saint Patrick's Purgatory, the Vision of Friar Alberic, the Apocalypse of Saint Paul, if they entered into the genesis of the Divine Comedy, had never been considered as models for the work which six centuries regarded as the product of original inventive genius. In that judgment the world was wrong, according to the dissertation, Escatologia Musulmana en la Divina Comedia, which Father Miguel Asin presented upon the occasion of his reception into membership of the Royal Academy, Madrid, in 1919. The English translation, due to the initiative of Lord Balfour and the Duke of Alba, has finally found publishers in E. P. Dutton and Company.

Father Asin aims to throw into relief the resemblances and analogies existing between the various forms of the Nocturnal Journey and Ascension of Mahomet, and the Divine Comedy, and so to prove that the latter is really an imitation of the former. From the eighth to the thirteenth centuries, Moslem traditionists, poets, and mystics elaborated the legend into a fabric of religious narrative. The most perfect adaptation of the legend is found in the Futurhat of the Murcian Ibn Arabi.

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"The similarity between this work and the Divine Comedy," says Dr. Asin, "betrays a relation such as exists between copy and model. That it should be a coincidence is impossible. . . . If imitation by Dante can be disproved, the manifest similarity is either an unsolvable mystery or a miracle of originality."

The reflecting reader sees at once that the charge of servile imitation cannot be made against Dante unless the impossible feat be demonstrated that Dante was a master of Arabic and had a comprehensive knowledge of the writings of Ibn Arabi. Some of these writings are today unedited and are extant in only three copies. They all present many difficulties, even to the most learned Arabic scholars. By means of paraphrases and translations they may have come to the knowledge of the Florentine poet, just as the philosophy of Averrhoes became known to Saint Thomas Aquinas, through the works of Maimonides and Raymond Martini. In that event, Dante will be recognized more than ever as the voice of the middle-ages, as expressing the thoughts, not only of the Christian world, but also of the realm of Mahomet. As Dr. Asin's book gives only the various summaries and not the text of the Islamic legend, it is impossible to make a minute comparison of the detailed treatment of all the subject-matter which appears both in the Futurhat and the Divine Comedy. The Moslem Hell, it is safe to say, shows no such artistic realism as that which distinguishes the Inferno and constitutes one of its great charms. Neither does it stand forth, as far as can be learned from the book under review, perfect in architecture as does the Inferno which amazed Ruskin because "it is accurately separated into circles drawn with well-pointed compasses, mapped and properly surveyed in every direction, trenched in a thoroughly good style of engineering."

It is certain that the Islamic legend cannot dethrone Dante. At most, it demonstrates that the religious literature of Islam in the theme of the hereafter "offers to investigators a more abundant harvest of ideas, images, symbols and descriptions similar to those of Dante than all the other religious literatures together that have up to now been consulted by Dantists in their endeavor to explain the genesis of the Divine Comedy." The truth is that even if Dante derived the material of the Divine Comedy from sources outside of himself, he has so transmuted and enriched it by his own experience and imagination that the original pales into insignificance when compared to the finished product of his artistic craftsmanship. A typical example in proof of this statement is afforded by the image of the dropping leaves, borrowed from Virgil. Dante transforms the simple image into a pathetic picture by personifying the stripped branch—an invention lacking in Virgil, and the transformation shows us "autumn leaves which drop one by one until the branch beholds all its garments on the ground." (Grandgent.)

In Dr. Asin's scholarly volume, insistence is made on the existence of Islamic literary models and little attention is given to the enrichment effected by Dante's art in transforming the copy, if copy it be, into a thing of ineffable beauty not found in the so-called model. A heavenly bride, v.g., is depicted in the Islamic paradise as meeting her earthly lover and upbraiding him for having on occasions forsaken her for other, earthly loves. The picture is crude. A parallel scene is painted by Dante of his meeting with Beatrice in the Garden of Eden. It is considered "one of the most touching and beautiful episodes in all literature."

JOHN T. SLATTERY.

Our Mobile Earth, by R. A. Daly. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $5.00.

Ice Ages Recent and Ancient, by A. P. Coleman. New York: The Macmillan Company. $4.00.

THESE two books, both dealing with the facies of our earth as we know it, and amply and splendidly illustrated, are by masters of their subjects. R. A. Daly, author of Our Mobile Earth, is professor of geology at Harvard University. A. P. Coleman, the writer of Ice Ages Recent and Ancient, is emeritus professor of the same subject in Toronto University, and well known as a leading authority on the ice age. Neither book is beyond the comprehension of the general reader, and both are of intense interest.

Dr. Daly commences his thesis with the idea of a molten hot world. Dr. Coleman is not so sure of this—it was "void and empty," and the clouds of vapor and smoke which hung over it covered it with darkness. Then it cooled, and water was deposited—at first covering the whole surface save where, perhaps, here and there, the peak of a volcano rose above it. Not until shrinkage of the part that was land took place with the formation of deep clefts and elevated portions, were the waters separated into seas, lakes, and rivers. Then dry land emerged for the reception of those living things which did not frequent, as most of the first comers did, the waters. Since those early days there have been violent convulsions, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, the causes and nature of which are fully detailed in Dr. Daly's book.

Dr. Daly is prepared to accept the Wegener theory, of which Dr. Coleman is more doubtful, which tells us that there was, in post-carboniferous times, but one single continent, and one ocean which was a much enlarged Pacific. Then for some reason unknown (and at present that is the weak point in the theory) this mass was rent in twain longitudinally, and a large part floated off in a westerly direction to form the new world—the tremendous wrench piling up the Rockies and the Andes as it terminated. The waters rushing in between the two continents formed the Atlantic, and the mid-Atlantic swell—a ridge which runs beneath it and between the two continents, parallel with their long axes—marks the spot where the rupture took place. It is about a mile high, and the island of Ascension stands above it at about its central point. This is an amazing theory, but there are many things to support it—especially the correspondence of the strata on each side of the Atlantic. At the same time, the nose of northeastern Africa was being pulled out of the Gulf of Mexico, the great island continent of Australia was torn off as well as Antarctica; while the Indian peninsula drifted north, piling up in its transit the Himalayas, the loftiest and the youngest of mountain ranges.

After those vast convulsions the earth seems to have rested from its major efforts, though movements of some sort are constantly going on—hence the sea-covered cities of Tunis and elsewhere, and the elevated lands where the sea once was, such as those on the east coast of England—towns with seaside names but now some miles inland. Even Boston moves up and down every few hours; it is a very slight movement on an arc of many hundred miles, but it exists. Boston is built on the eroded summit of a very ancient mountain range.

Some of the most remarkable of the movements of the earth have been due to the ice ages. There have been many of these ages from the very earliest times. The last, or pleistocene, which came to an end about twenty thousand years

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ago on this continent, covered with ice about four thousand square miles of North America, including the whole of Canada. In some places the ice was as much as three miles in thickness. As there was a similar ice formation in northern Europe at the same time, it may be imagined that a good deal of water was locked up in the process. In fact, it is calculated that the surface of the oceans was lowered 150 feet during that time. How considerable a lowering that is will be understood when it is remembered that if the land surfaces of the earth were smoothed out to conform to the contour of the planet, the seas would cover everything to a depth of two miles. Moreover, the weight of this immense mass of ice depressed the land on which it lay, the crust of the earth being elastic and resting on a fluid magma beneath.

Of course, many of the ideas advanced in these two books are still theories, but there are strong scientific arguments in favor of them, and a number of statements are ascertained facts. In both cases the style is pleasant and the language not unduly technical.

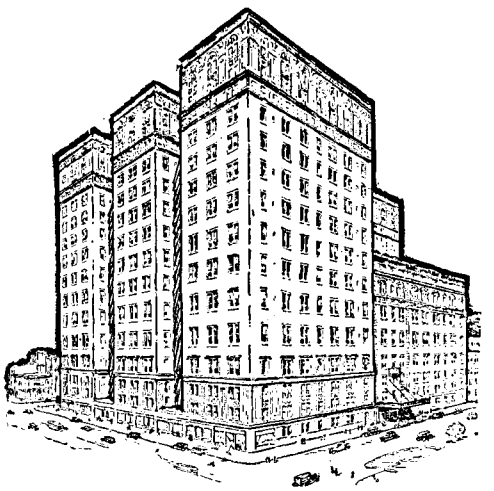
BERTRAM C. A. WINDLE.

The Art of Being Ruled, by Wyndham Lewis. New York: Harper and Brothers. $4.00.

HERE is a book by a "cold thinker," the number of which is reported by my confrère, Mr. Stuart, as being very small—news which may well increase one's dwindling optimism. It discusses the metaphysics of government, erasing with a wry and understanding smile all such matters as political campaigns and ward bosses. How ought the human race—or rather the theoreticians of the human race, those masters of unsentimental reason—approach the problem of misrule? Mr. Lewis is not so bold as to draw up a practical formula. Beginning with the general assumption that revolution is a basic rule of modern life, he proceeds in the direction of a kind of internationalized Fascismo even while pausing to fling bombs at a great variety of matters construed as "sentiment." Democracy? Mr. Lewis would have none of that. It has never withstood the probe of reason, it is the buffoon of political experience.

Unfortunately, Mr. Lewis is an atrocious writer. It is all very well to drink in the fogs of Carlyle and Samuel Butler, but one should realize that doing so means frankly daring to become provincial and prophetic. These sentences embossed with horny intricacies, these paragraphs which do not follow, this book which is not a book, but a series of theses—the whole of it would round the lips of any intellectually aristocratic Frenchman. And yet the style does characterize a man who is nothing so much as a graduate from consciously or unconsciously assimilated Bergsonism into disillusionment. Big mouthfuls like "the great war was a gigantic episode in the Russian revolution" (it might be stated here that Mr. Lewis frequently out-Spenglers Spengler) are thrown at one en passant. A variety of loftily disdainful satire is expended upon matters like Christianity and romanticism. And, of course, there are plenty of quotations from Professor Irving Babbitt.

But should you read the book? Yes, if you have got through your primer of sociology and over your youthful flush of heterodoxy. Mr. Lewis offers a kind of summa of modern political thinking. Each chapter states a proposition, which is then examined and confuted in the best scholastic fashion. "Distinguo" is his forte, and is especially effective where liberalism is the target. There is some very shrewd criticism of Bernard Shaw and sundry other folk, some pertinent explanation of



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what men like Sorel and Kautsky attempted to profess. Few books give you more thinking about sociological problems of primary importance, as distinguished from facts of primary importance. Mr. Lewis is not a devotee of facts or statistics. Your "thinker" never is, being primarily far more interested in philosophies or ensembles.

The Catholic reply to books like this has not yet been written. In a very earnest sense it need not be written, and certainly I shall not foolishly attempt to outline it here. But it does seem that the Church—or any other institution for that matter—has conquered the world precisely because it did not need to be clever. The Church has even conquered a representative number of artists, who seem to be Mr. Lewis's symbol of ultimate cleverness. Perhaps in the end it need only admit, when a new school of Doric sages has gone its way, that it has sometimes seen the miracle of grace.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

Sam Noble, Able Seaman: 'Tween Decks in the 'Seventies. An Autobiography. New York: Frederick A. Stokes. $3.00.

ABLE seamen have this in common with cats on mantles: they know their way about, and are exceedingly nimble in following it. If permitted to take their own time and choose their own channel, neither buoys nor bric-à-brac are much at hazard because of them.

Mr. Noble, for example. He steers a pleasant and quite illogical course, in and out and roundabout, among his recollections of early and seagoing years on H.M.S. Swallow. We are greatly diverted; sometimes hugely amused; once in awhile deeply touched. At the end of it we know a great deal about the entirely likable and unassuming author; a good bit about his mates; something about his officers, but rather less than we should like about the hard facts of life in the English navy in the 'seventies.

But the book makes excellent reading, and the author's zest in recollection casts a golden, sunset glow over the whole book, that is as warming to the heart's cockles as must have been the "tots" of grog he lovingly celebrates.

One is particularly struck with Mr. Noble's quite extraordinary power of making one see through his eyes. A long twilight on the old Victory; the softening shores of lovely England; a lonely trick at the wheel under full starlight: one has them perfectly, after the author, in entire simplicity, has given them to us. A real touch of literary greatness, that.

One of my elderly friends used to speak of certain books as making "comfortable reading." (An excellent recommendation to the rivet-racked and subway-ridden.) 'Tween Decks is comfortable reading. A prosperous voyage to it.

BENJAMIN R. C. LOW.

BRIEFER MENTION

The Second Book of Negro Spirituals, edited by James Weldon Johnson; musical arrangement by J. Rosamond Johnson. New York: The Viking Press. $3.50.

THE older critics were accustomed to find in Negro music many traces of the experiences of the race after it had left its African home. Mr. Johnson, the editor of the Second Book of Negro Spirituals, seems to lean a trifle too closely to the story of the African origins of the music of the spirituals and makes no mention of the Spanish and French influences that show themselves markedly in the West Indian and South American Negro music. The evangelical hymns and the popular melodies of the northern and southern states have also their place in this history of the spirituals which, it is rather surprising to find, the modern critics of their words and music are rather slow to acknowledge. The present volume of spirituals presents some splendid results of the marked Negro faculty for harmonies and tonal phrasings. The collecting of these volumes of Negro folk-lore and music, comes a little later in history, but is yet timely enough to produce art results in American composition which, while their limitations should be recognized, really form a valuable national asset.

Die Gefrorene Melodie, by Karl Linzen. Kempten: Jos. Kösel'sche Buchhandlung. Eight marks.

THE place of poetic reflection in novel writing is well emphasized by such English books as Marius the Epicurean, and Flecker's King of Alsander. But begin to read the present German story and you are immediately in a kind of world not conceived of by either of the above enumerated tales—a world in which reflection is almost the sole activity. Klaus Noggerath, an elderly recluse and painter, dreams back over his life and its motives. We consider the things that have happened as well as the things which really did not happen. His lovely, curious, memory-haunted house becomes the shelter of character and readers—until, at the end, the windows are opened and action is aroused. It is a curious book, wise and beautifully written. Linzen is one of the newer Catholic novelists and has distinguished himself for notable essay writing and exquisite short-story telling. The present book seems an advance over the rest of his narrative work.

(Through an error in The Commonweal of November 17, a book review of Le Merveilleux Voyage de Saint Brandan à la Recherche du Paradis, by Paul Tuffrau, failed to mention the publisher. The book is published by l' Artisan du Livre, 2 rue de Fleurus, Paris, France; price, 10 francs.)

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THE QUIET CORNER

I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library.—C. LAMB.

"I," said Miss Brynmarian, drowsily regarding the steady November rain beating on the window, and pulling her chair closer to the open fire, "I am in the mood for a story. And it must be a story about dreams, Angelicus."

"Much over-rated things," grumbled the Doctor, sorting a pile of manuscripts on his desk, "and far too important in the lives of most young women. Nevertheless, anything to oblige a lady, and, as luck will have it, here is such a story, written by our friend, Cyril B. Egan, which has just reached me."

Miss Brynmarian settled back with a contented sigh, and Dr. Angelicus read:

"Leonidas, the sculptor, knew well what he wanted, but he couldn't for the life of him work it out. He couldn't for all his skill, contrive them to his liking. The head was right, the torso and the legs were right: he defied Praxiteles or Phidias to do better; but the arms—ah, what was wrong with the arms?

"Possibly the ideal which he had set himself was unattainably high: To carve this Diana of Corinth, to shape spiritual beauty that should express itself in, but above, physical beauty—was not this truly a shooting at the moon? Yet hope—high hope—kept him spurred on, day in and day out, and sometimes through the long night; and only occasionally would Leonidas sit himself down beside the unfinished work to bewail his continual frustration.

"'Ye gods,' he would then complain, 'why do you keep putting me off? Is not this a pious work? Will it not reflect credit on the high heavens? Wherein does it earn your disfavor? Oh, if I could only form those arms as they are modeled in my fancy—or even as they are molded in the clay—there would be a marble here that would melt the hardest heart, delight the dullest eye, ravish the keenest intellect!'

"Then again he would visualize, vividly, his Diana of dreams; and once more his palms would itch for the grasp of the mallet and chisel.

"Click, click, click! Day in and day out, from Leonidas's workshop sounded the steel on stone—click, click, click—chipping and scraping away; and every so often—crash!—the demolition of one Diana, and the beginning of another anew.

"And always the head and the torso and the legs were perfection; but the arms—click, click, click—he must hew and hack and chip and scrape them over—over and over—before they should be right: too much of strength in this sinew, the vigor of his right arm going into her right arm—the delicacy and tenderness which he intended so strenuously being translated in the marble as ponderous strenuosity and nought besides. Too much effort, too little art—click, click, click—and yet how was one going to be able to right the work without the effort?

"There came a night, after long and discouraging toil, when Leonidas threw himself down on his couch beside the statue to sleep and dream—a most distracting dream. He dreamed that he was standing near the edge of a dark sea, gazing up at a wreath of mist that hovered about the moon. And presently this moon-mist came floating down to him, and out of the mist, two arms—moon-white twins of fragmentary loveliness—never had he seen them so wonderful as they appeared tonight—and they were beckoning him, summoning him, as they approached toward the dark margin of the sea. Eagerly Leonidas

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stepped forward to meet them. He felt the water wash about his sandaled feet, but he didn't care—forward and forward, on he went, until, breast deep in the waves, he felt those cool white arms entwined lovingly about his neck. Then one coaxing step backward he took; but the lovely arms would not give; instead they enfolded him more fervently, more and more firmly, until their tender fervor was intensified to a sinewy fierceness—a tigerish ferocity which there was no resisting—pulling him forward and dragging him down; pulling him forward and dragging him down into the dark waters of oblivion, deeper and deeper.

"He awoke, crying out as his hands alternately clutched and pulled away from his neck:

"'Those arms—those arms—those beautiful arms—those damnable arms!'

"He awoke, and his eyes were opened wide; but still the dazzling white beauty of the vision provoked him, even as his waking glance rested on the statue beside him, with all its torturous agony of effort, all its stony-sinewed crudities painfully apparent in the relentless light of dawn.

"With a wild cry, Leonidas leaped from the bed, grabbed up his mallet, and once more stood face to face with his work.

"'The arms, the arms!' he sobbed. 'I can't get the arms!'

"And he smote them, fiercely—first right, then left; and he pitched the rest of his dream into the scrap heap. . . .

"That happened a century before Christ.

"Much later, on a certain April 1, toward the middle of the twentieth century, this despatch appeared in all the papers:

"'Athens, Greece: A remarkable statue of Diana has been found in a cellar of the Corinthian suburbs . . . pronounced by art connoisseurs to be the most beautiful in the world . . . Numerous exploration parties have already formed to search for the missing arms, which—to judge by the other proportions—must be incomparable.'"

Miss Brynmarian sighed as the story came to an end.

"Poor Leonidas," she said. "What a pity he could not form those arms. Now if it hadn't been for his dream!—"

"Exactly," said the Doctor. "It proves that dreams are as bad for sculptors as they are for young ladies."

"Nevertheless," replied Miss Brynmarian, "you will have to admit that Leonidas was far in advance of his time."

"How do you mean?" asked the Doctor.

"Well, he seems to have been one of the first to advocate and practise disarmament," declared Miss Brynmarian.

—THE LIBRARIAN.

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